

Golden Crystals

ESSAYS ON

SIKH

HISTORY

Ranjit Singh 'Kharag'

**Compiled and Edited By
Er. Karamjit Singh**

Golden Crystals
Essays on Sikh History

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Dedicated to

Late Sardar Inderjit Singh ‘Dewal’

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About the Compilation of this Book

Late Sr. Ranjit Singh 'Kharag' was a prolific writer. He wrote in English, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu. His articles were published in leading periodicals. He wrote extensively on religion, social concerns and Sikh history. It appears from his writing that his study about anything that he wrote was very deep. Whatever he wrote was well reasoned and convincing. Whether it was prose or poetry, it showed literary excellence.

He had been writing tirelessly with missionary zeal. Unfortunately, he did not live to see his writings in book form. He expired at the age of 54, while he was still in service. He left behind a huge treasure of valuable writings.

It is gratifying to note that his worthy son Er. Karamjit Singh and his fully devoted daughter-in-Law Mrs. Harjinder Kaur have kept the very valuable literary treasure very safely. After their retirement, they have thought of publishing it. They have already published four books in Punjabi, 'Sant Namdev Darshan,' 'Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya,' 'Suche Moti' and 'Rut Kasumbe Di'. The first two books are very well researched articles and the third is a book of poems, mostly religious and the fourth is an anthology of poems and gazals which speak volumes of his deep indepth study of Punjabi ethos.

This publication is a compilation of Sardar Ranjit Singh Kharag's articles in English published in two leading journals- 'The Sikh Review' of Calcutta (Kolkata), and the 'Spokesman' Weekly of Delhi. The eighteen odd chapters in the book, beginning with brief life sketch of 'Kharag' ji, cover various aspects of Sikh history, and teachings of Guru's. The articles are well researched and throw flood of light on various aspects of Sikh history, some of which even tended to be a bit controversial, like Guru Nanak's date of birth.

Though he was not connected with any academic institution, it goes to his credit that being stationed in Shimla, as an official

of A.G.P&T, he wrote so meaningfully and relentlessly, especially when very few writers were writing in English and he was published in leading journals.

He deeply studied the available works on the life and teachings of Guru's. He commented on quotes intensively from Mahakavi Santokh Singh's 'Guru Partap Suraj', popularly known as Suraj Parkash, writings of Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, Dr Tarlochan Singh, Bhai Karam Singh-Historian, Bawa Prem Singh Hoti, Prof Piara Singh 'Padam', Dr Ganda Singh and Prof. Sahib Singh, to cite a few.

While writing of Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad, he writes about the history of the city and its place in the Muslim world. The city was founded in 762 BC near the ruins of Babylon and later on became an important centre of Muslim theology. The Caliphs started living there when the first phase of Muslim conquests had ended. Guru Nanak's visit to the place has been vividly described. He gives very interesting details about the place hallowed by Guru Nanak's stay and how it was found.

The determination of Guru Nanak's date of birth has also been explained in a very interesting manner in the light of the findings of historians of repute.

In the eyes of the author, Guru Nanak was not only a religious leader; he was a great social reformer, a spiritual scientist, a prophet and an angel who had a deep insight into human psyche and fully aware of the political and economic conditions prevailing in the country. His writings adorn the holy Book-Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

He has also written about the compilation of the Holy Book by Guru Arjan Dev and his own contribution there to in addition to that of the preceding Gurus and Saints of mediieval times. He has written wonderfully about the significance of Baisakhi in Sikh history right from Guru Nanak Dev ji's time up to the few decades of free India covering a period of nearly 478 years.

The very illuminating article 'Turning point in Sikh history' gives a vivid account of turmoil and tribulations in Sikhism, right from Guru Nanak to Guru Arjan Dev's martyrdom. The essays on Gurbani and Gurmat philosophy make an interesting reading.

The writer has also very ably brought out literary aspect of Dasam Granth with particular reference to Zafarnamah and Bachittar Natak. His article on 'Military genius of Guru Gobind Singh' is quite illuminating. The relevance of these articles remains intact despite that gap of half a century.

I congratulate Mrs. and Er. Karamjit Singh in bring out this compilation which will be a valuable addition to Sikh history and literature and help in better understanding of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus and ethos of Sikh faith. The valuable work is worth reading and preserving too for posterity.

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About the Writer: My Father

My late father S. Ranjit Singh 'Kharag' was born on 18 March, 1915 at Adampur, a prominent village in Doaba region of Punjab to Bibi Kartar Kaur and Lala Malawa Ram Dewal; a highly respected conservative middle class family. Originally, our ancestors were Qiladars at Kandhala Sheikhan with residence at village Jhanwan (Hoshiarpur). During the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh; they lost to Garhdiwala Sardars in one of the continued feud and finally settled at Adampur Doaba. Having firmly settled themselves at their new place of residence they carved out an honorable niche in the social circle of the area. Sardar Budh Singh, the Grandfather of Sr. Ranjit Singh 'Kharag' was a prominent personality and played a leading role in the social and political activities.

My father passed his matriculation in 1930 with first division and achieved distinction in the vernacular subjects of English and Persian, later on passed B.A. in Punjabi (*Gyani*) as well. As president of Vidyarthi Parishad-Adampur Doaba, he played a prominent part in the establishment of Arya Samaj at Adampur. He and his compatriots were deeply influenced on account of martyrdom of Bhagat Singh and his associates. The struggle for freedom was in full swing at that time and a sense of national integration had permeated deep into the psyche of every Indian irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The revolutionaries of Babbar Khalsa fame belonged to adjoining village of Khurdpur, and soon the seeds of patriotism sown blossomed into flowers and whole of the district felt its fragrance. They held daily agitation in front of police station under a Banyan Tree (*Bohar*). His future literary pursuits therefore assumed revolutionary character. His poems appeared in the leading papers of Lahore and thus barred his entry into Government service. He went to Lahore, Delhi,

and Nagpur for his livelihood and finally settled at Shimla which incidentally became his *Karam Bhumi*.

The revolutionary environment provided him an excellent opportunity to study deeply and write meaningfully. He was poet to the core and started writing since his student days, his tender heart bled at the plight of down trodden and this aspect is fully reflected in his poetry. Even as an official of Accountant General Post and Telegraphs, Shimla, he could find time to create a vast collection of literature. He was a poet, an accomplished writer, a fine orator, Sikh historian and preacher all rolled into one. He wrote in Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and English. His articles on various subjects with particular reference to Punjab, Punjabiat and Sikh history appeared in prominent Punjabi magazines. His articles in English on Sikh History appeared in The 'Spokesman' weekly and 'Sikh Review' and he was a regular contributor to The "Spokesman" weekly. This prestigious journal was the brain child of Sr. Hukam Singh, Speaker of Lok Sabha and later on Governor of Rajasthan. Each issue of journal carried thought provoking articles by eminent writers such as Prof. S.S.Amol, Principal Harbhjan Singh, Principal Satbir Singh, Prof Harbans Singh, Dr. Taran Singh, Dr Harnam Singh Shan, Prof Parkash Singh, Dr. G.S.Mansukhani, Dr Dalip Singh Deep, Sardar Shamsher Singh Ashok and Sardar Narinder Singh Soch to name a few. This dedicated Sikh history journal was an Encyclopedia of Sikhism. It was a matter of pride for a writer to find mention in this English journal. He had a knack of and interest to delve deep into the ocean of Sikh history and continuously maintained the thread of correspondence with contemporary prominent historians for an update.

He became the President of 'Kavi Gulzar Shimla', after Bhaia Ishar left Shimla on his superannuation in the year 1953, as Post Master; Chaura Maidan Post office (opposite Cecil Hotel). He was president of 'All India Literary council-Shimla', 'World Peace Council-Shimla' and vice president of 'Kavi Mandal, Shimla' as well. As president of Kavi Gulzar, he created a dedicated platform for the propagation of Punjabi language and culture, which brought about a coherent group of Punjabi poets,

mostly Government officials. It was a matter of pride and pleasure for him in initiating a movement that worked towards creating a healthy and competitive stage for budding poets and writers. Be it prose or verse; he prized versatility, the most. He was the acknowledged guide to budding poets. The Kavi Gulzar of Shimla (Punjab) of that time was busy, bustling with enthusiasm and crowded, but each poet had his own identity and distinctive style. This comradeship remained up to 1966. Thereafter the Simla was transferred to Himchal Pardesh along with other hilly areas. Subsequent to this, the offices of Punjab government also shifted to Chandigarh, Punjabi language which had a place of pride in Shimla was delegated to second position and a fewer than six poets remained in Shimla. With the passage of time they also drifted and after his untimely demise Kavi Gulzar came to naught.

His first love was poetry, which he created with full intensity and devotion. He used to say that the arrival of a subject in his mind created sunshine of numerous suns, and spectrum of rainbow of thoughts resulted in a calm, continual flow of abundant poetry that oozed out like a steady stream. The later years of his life were entirely devoted to prose only. He has to his credit more than 400 poems and 450 plus essays in Punjabi published in various magazines on diverse subjects. These essays speak volume of his eloquent literary excellence, creativity and attracted tremendous acclaim. With his deep insight, he had a meteoric rise as a writer.

Since 1945, he was deeply and religiously attached to 'Shri Guru Singh Sabha'-Shimla and remained its General Secretary for a considerable long time and relinquished it willingly; thereafter he was manager of F.C.Sikh Girl's High School Shimla till his untimely demise. He was at ease with everybody. As office bearer of various societies he told his colleagues to follow the right path and dispel darkness, hatred and ignorance. He always distanced himself from controversy. His considered views on different issues were always appreciated. He was a man for whom a clear cut choice was a linear way and he avoided controversies and confrontations. There was a string of divinity

woven around him and humility was hall mark of his greatness and nobility.

The literary personality in him underwent a transformation after the independence of India; he strutted like a star on the horizon of Punjabi and English Magazines and wrote the praises of the Free India. In writing on the culture of Punjab, he advocated a coherent Sikh-Hindu unity which was the need of the day. He was a true insignia of faith in the omnipotent Sat Guru, always conscious with silent repetition of His sacred *Nam* on his lips. It was his initiative and judgment which goaded him to make inroads into the regions of intense and finer literary pursuits. His ample intensity to write and speak on any subject was his chief and prominent characteristic. He enlightened the masses on every Sunday with the *Katha* (Discourse) of Shri Guru Granth Sahib at Gurdwara Singh Sabha Shimla. And the people of Shimla still remember him with adoration.

Soft spoken and tender hearted, he had a tall compelling and graceful personality. A creative genius, he was a man of few words, yet when it came to family issues, there was no argument and no compromise, and this was his firm faith in family bond, based on his home spun powerful philosophy that good family values must be fostered. As authoritative yet loving head of the family he never faltered. He had a careless attitude not bordering on neglect because my mother managed the house commendably, by giving him ample time to attend to his literary pursuits.

He expired on 30 Dec, 1971 at Delhi. His literary creations in Punjabi and English published in various magazines could not be brought out in book form during his life time. It is said that the web of your life is of a mingled tarn, good and ill together. And this actually happened to us and his sudden departure left us in indigent circumstances and we were left to fend for ourselves. In these compelling circumstances, despite my best efforts, I couldn't do justice to the vast literary treasure left behind. It was dutifully preserved but it remained unattended all these years. Though I got feelers from friends and well wishers to get the books published, but despite my best efforts, I could not do justice to this vast literary treasure for want of time and money. After my retirement

in August, 2007; a trust in the sacred and everlasting memory of our parents known as "**Ranjit Memorial Charitable Trust (Regd.), Adampur Doaba**" was formed by me with the active support of my better half, Sdn Harjinder Kaur. Along with other welfare projects; the trust is actively engaged in the process of compilation of published articles of Late Sr. Ranjit Singh 'Kharag' and bring these into book form. Already the four books in Punjabi have been published, released and the collection of English articles is in your hands. I have reverentially retained the originality of the articles. Certain additions have been made in the light of the later research. I have taken the liberty to include a poem by Swami Anandacharya which vividly sings the praises of Baba Nanak on his visit to Baghdad. This essay has been extended in view of the after math of Iraq war.

Last but not the least: He was a doting father; and explained to me the facts of life and our debt to society. But I would not listen and later on when I became a father, the seeds of his sagacious advice bore fruit and I was drawn to and engaged myself in the service of downtrodden. My mother goaded me to start a free sewing school for the poor girls of the society, which I did with dedication and devotion as President of Lions Club Adampur Doaba, the school continued for four years (1998-2002). Now under the patronage of 'Ranjit Memorial Charitable Trust (Regd)', a free sewing school is being run by the Trust. And the credit for its uninterrupted operation since 2008 goes to Sdn. Harjinder Kaur, vice Chairperson of the Trust. This is our continuous tribute to you dear **Parents**.

Did I overwrite your profile: **No Father, you deserve more!**

It is very little considering your greatness and contribution to the society, country, literature and abiding faith in Akalpurkh.

My thanks are due to Sr. Kuldip Singh Bedi, Editor 'Magazine Section-Jagbani'; it is due to his active support that this book could see the light of the day. I shall be failing in my duty if I do not recognize Sr. Kulwant Singh Toheem and Sdn. Kamaljit Kaur (brother-in-Law and younger sister) for their perpetual support. I express my love and affection towards my family: Gagan-Seema

and Aman-Vinder, who have always supported me in my endeavor.

I extend my thanks to Shri Harish Jain of 'Unistar Publications' who has published this collection with utmost care.

I am confident that the readers will draw inspiration from its reading to serve humanity and I shall deem it an honor that the labors-vision of my father and our efforts has borne fruit. It is my humble tribute to his literary genius.

**Daate Daat Rakhi Hath Apnay
Jiss Bhaavay Tiss Dayee**

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Baba Ji at Baghdad

It was during his stay at Sultanpur that one day while bathing in a rivulet it was revealed to Nanak that 'There was no Hindu and there was no Muslman'. He asserted that the *Qazi* who sat in judgment on others took bribe and was fanatical. The *Brahmins* were no better. The *yogi* did not know the spirit and sense of his religion and groped in dark. These three who claimed to be leaders of the people and were considered as such, in fact were contributing to the destruction of society. It was reserved for Guru Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those broad foundations which enabled his successor, Guru Gobind Singh, to fire the minds of his country men with a new nationality and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal to the highest, in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes. When the law of jungle was prevailing in the country, the Guru took courage in both hands and proved in his novel way the hollowness of rites and rituals observed by Hindus and Mohamedans. He undertook five long arduous journeys, called *udasis*, and visited Hardwar, Jagannath, and the caves of *Sidhas* and *Jogis*, and warned them of negligence of their duty towards their fellow men.

Similarly according to *Puratan janam sakhi*, the fourth journey took him to the west¹. He put on trousers, leather sandals, a necklace of bones, and painted his forehead with saffron. His other clothes were blue. In this strange dress of a semi Hajji, he went to Mecca. On the way, he halted at Baghdad, a stronghold of Islamic culture and divinity. In the words of Bhai Gurdas, after reducing the stronghold of Baghdad² he conquered with love and reasoning Mecca and Madina.

Baghdad's fame

Baghdad³, now the capital of Iraq has come into limelight for a variety of reasons and its military pacts. It was founded on the

banks of the Euphrates, near the ruins of Babylon, in 762 AC, when the dynasty of Abbasid Caliphs succeeded the Umayyad. With it began the Muslim contribution to material civilization. The first age of external conquest was over and it was succeeded by an age of internal expansion.

The ninth and tenth centuries witnessed the climax of Islamic civilization in breadth and creative effort. Industry, commerce, architecture and the minor arts flourished with immense vitality. Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt contributed to the common stock. The stories of the celebrated work 'Alif Laila' depict the romantic glory of Baghdad. The city reached its peak of fame in the regime of Haroon-ul-Rashid who was well known for his justice, liberality of mind and patronage of men of letters of all climes and countries. The Abbasid caliphate declined in the 11th century and the Mongols put an end to the historic Caliphate of Baghdad in 1258. (Mohammedanism: An Historical Survey by Sir Hamilton A.R. Gibb).

Inspired by the cultural importance attached to Baghdad by the Muslim world, the Amir of Bahawalpur state (now in Pakistan) renamed his capital as Baghdad-ul-Jadid (New Baghdad).

Sadhu Gobind Singh met an aged Muslim *Fakir* of Baghdad, who lived in Chor Bazar, Bombay. The former told *Fakir* that he was an ascetic of Nanak Panth. The latter was too pleased to know this and eulogized the qualities of great Guru, who according to him had a following in Baghdad. There is a monument situated at a distance of seven *Kos* from that city. An annual fair in memory of Nanak Pir is held there. This is mentioned in Hindi work 'Itihas Guru Khalsa'.

A Strange Azan

Guru Nanak on reaching Baghdad stayed in a graveyard. Mardana: the rebeck player was his companion. In the early morning, just to attract people, he gave *Azan*⁴ (Muslim call to prayer) in his own fashion, according to Janamsakhi by Bhai Mani Singh, uttering thus:

**Gurbar akal, chit charan nam, ghar ghar parnam,
prabhu Kirpal, so sarbjival.**

But 'Sri Guru Nanak Parkash' Says that Guru Ji said:

'Patala Patal Lakh Agasa Agas'

The people gathered around him in large numbers and interrogated him why he substituted these words for the conventional call to prayers. The Guru is said to have explained that the epithets of God employed by him were synonymous with those found in 'La-illaha-illillah' or 'Bismillah-ir-rahman-ir-rahim'. When they objected that he had excluded the name of Prophet Muhammad, he told them that the Quran repeatedly disclaimed on the prophet's behalf anything that savoured of the superhuman. He was but a mortal commissioned with the sole duty of conveying God's warning for message of salvation and God did not require the help of any human being in his great task of management of in-numerable worlds underneath and above our own.

Guru Impresses the Pir

This explanation which did not conform to their beliefs enraged the people. They went to their chief theologian, named Pir Dasgir; a descendent of Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani Pir Dastagir.⁵ He ordered them to stone the Guru to death for injuring their feelings. But to their dismay and amusement, they failed to do so. They found their hands holding the stones paralyzed and their arms stuck upwards. On hearing this Pir came out with his son to see for him self what was happening. He asked the Guru to show his son in-numerable skies-more than seven, which was the number according to Islamic belief. The Guru asked the boy to shut his eyes. According to Bhai Gurdas; the Pir's son did so and felt as if he was flying through innumerable worlds. As a token of his having done so, he was seen holding *Karh Prasad*, which he said he had got in a divine congregation attended by him in one of the worlds he witnessed. The Pir was satisfied. Though it was miracle for him in those days, yet today when the scientists are planning flights to Mars and the Moon and the fact that there are more than seven skies has been confirmed. The poet of the east, Dr Iqbal has rightly said:

Sitaron se age jahan aur bhi hain.

The Pir⁶ took the Guru respectfully to his residence and the latter stayed with him for some time. Karam Singh historian, who visited Baghdad before World War I (1914-1918), was told that the Guru stayed in a house outside the Mausoleum of Abdul Qadir.

Shah Bahlol becomes Disciple

Bahlol was another Fakir who was greatly impressed by the Guru and became his disciple. This is evident from a poem written by a Sanyasi, Swami Anandacharya, in his book 'Snow Birds'. He wrote the poem on reading an Arabic inscription⁷ outside the town of Baghdad dated 912 Hizra. The inscription translated read as follows.

'And ere he left this house of ignorance, he wrote these words upon the stone: 'Here spake the Hindi (Hindu) Guru Nanak to Fakir Bahlol, and for these sixty winters, since the Guru left Iran, the soul of Bahlol has rested on the Master's word like a bee poised on a dawn-lit-honey-rose'.

But no such inscription is now found in Baghdad. There is however another inscription, in Arabic vitiated by Turki words found in a four walled enclosure near the Baghdad-Samara Railway line. This is situated to the south of a graveyard. There are graves of Bahlol and Muhammad Pasha Arnaoot. By the side of latter's grave, there is a platform dedicated to the memory of Guru Nanak. It contains some Arabic inscriptions. Its rendering would be:

"In memory of the Guru, that is the divine Master Baba Nanak Fakir Aulia, this Building has been raised anew with help of seven saints". And the chronogram reads: 'The blessed disciple has produced a spring of grace-year 927 H'. (History of Sikhs, page-12).

Even Bhai Vir Singh ji adopted this version. The other two inscriptions are given as under. The language of the inscription is of Persho-Arabic, and Turkish.

When Murad saw the building of Baba Nanak; the Prophet of God, fallen in ruins, he built a new one instead, with the help of his own hands so that it may stand as a monument

in history for generations to come, and that the meritorious act of his fortunate disciple may last for aye's.

he second is as follows "whoever saw this sacred place of Baba Nanak Fakir was granted fulfillment of his hearts desire by Great God and seven Angels helped him. Its date lays in the line "He caused a spring of grace to flow for his lucky disciple" Year 927H. (Prof Kartar Singh M.A; Guru Nanak Dev life and teachings)- Editor

The translation given in Banerjee's Evolution of Khalsa is obviously wrong being due to an attempt to prove that Guru was disciple of a Muslim Fakir⁸. The Guru may have been influenced by many Hindu and Muslim fakirs, but as he himself says, his Guru was God himself (See Sorath XI and Var Bhai Gurdas, Var XI11.25). It was not the habit of Gurus to hide the names of their spiritual guide: **'He who does not acknowledge his Guru is base'** (Var Gauri-IV Guru).

Date of Sojourn

The date of inscription places the Guru's sojourn at Baghdad in the year 927 H⁹, which corresponds to 1520-21, A.C. The rendering of inscription given above was adopted by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha who got the translation from Central Sikh Committee Baghdad. But he has not given the year. He further says that water of all the wells in the area was brackish and Guru Nanak got a well dug up and sweet water came out of it.

Writers differ on the name of ruler of Baghdad when Guru Nanak visited that place. From the above mentioned inscription, Bhai Vir Singh infers that Murad was the king who had the platform built. Giani Gyan Singh says in 'Twarikh Guru Khalsa (Urdu)' that Nasihat Namah or the admonitory letter attributed to the Guru was addressed to Caliph of Baghdad. In Panth Parkash, the author gives the Caliph's name as Bakr, the grandson of Waheed, who sent his famous general, Mohammad Bin Qasim, to subdue India. Bakr had imprisoned many *Pirs* and *fakirs* because

they failed to bless him with a son. Guru Nanak went to their rescue. He had them released and blessed the caliph with a son. T

Fabulous Chola

The Caliph's wife out of gratitude presented the Guru with a Chola (cloak) which had holy hymns of the Quran written on it. The Guru gave it to Makhdum Bahauddin. In 1845 Bikrami, Kabuli Mal Bedi, of Dera Baba Nanak, acquired it from the disciples of Makhdum, and used it as source of revenue by giving a glimpse of it to wealthy Sikhs for a high fee.

Giani Udham Singh mentions Ismail Safwi as the ruler of Baghdad who presented the Chola to the Guru. (It appears to be correct because in 1508, Baghdad was temporarily incorporated into new Persian [Iranian] empire created by Shah Ismail of Safavid dynasty [Encyclopedia Britannica India and the world]. Dr Kirpal Singh in 'Janamsakhi Tradition: An Analytical Study' says that at the time of Guru Nanak, Baghdad was under Iranians. In 1507-08, Safvi Shah Ismail over ran it and he ruled over it until 1524.-Editor).

Bhai Santokh Singh describes it as having descended upon the Guru from the heaven when he was on his way to Habsh Walayat (Ethiopia). It had thirty paras of the holy Quran written on it in five languages, Hindi, Persian, Arabic, Turki, and Sanskrit.

No mention of the fabulous Chola sahib is found in earlier writings, such as those of Walayat Wali or of Hafizabadi Janam Sakhi, or that of Bhai Mani Singh. Most probably this tale was introduced by Hindali writers to present the Guru as to have been influenced by Islam. Such incorrect fables encouraged Muslim writers like Babu Mohammad Yusuf and Giani Wahid Hussain to prove the improbable suggestions that Guru Nanak was a Muslim by faith. In fact, he has been claimed by Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others alike:

'Sabna da sanjah Baba sabna da yar wo'

Editor adds: Author of the above essay has referred to visit of certain Sikhs to Baghdad in Punjabi essay 'Baba Ji Baghdad Gaye' published in Gurmat Parkash of July, 1969 now incorporated in the book, 'Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya'. Sr. Karam Singh Historian, in his quest of collecting details of Guru's visit to various parts of India and abroad desired to visit Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. But the main impediment was the expenditure and ban imposed by orthodox Muslims restricting the visit non muslims to the reverential Kaba. His visit was sponsored by Bhai Takhat Singh of Kanya Mahavidyalaya Ferozpur and assistance for travel, came from an unexpected quarter i.e. from a Sayyed who was the head of a Hazi Jatha, incidentally this Sayyed was cured of an irremediable disease with the medicinal prescription provided by Bhai Karam Singh. Bhai Sahib reached Baghdad safely as deputy of the Jatha of Hazis; being well versed with the recitation of five Namaz and adorned the garb of a Hazi. On reaching Baghdad certain Punjabi (Muslims) members of the Jatha grew suspicious of the activities of the Bhai sahib and started asking oblique questions about *Sunnat*. Further probing about other religious traditions and customs connected with Muslims tenets aggravated the situation. And subsequent rescue, in the garb of divine favour came from a police officer named Muhammad Azad Afrindi who was an uncle of his (Bhai Karam Singh's) college mate; bailed him out of this absurd and perplex situation. He reprimanded the other Hazis. Bhai Sahib abandoned the idea of his visit to Mecca and collected the details and proof of Guru's visit to Baghdad, which were published in 'Karam Singh de Lekh' edited by Sardar Hira Singh 'Dard'

The Sikh soldiers fighting under British forces in the years 1914-1918 invaded and captured Baghdad. They explored the places connected with the visit of Guru. Capt (Dr) Kirpal Singh sent a detailed account of Guru's visit and of a monument dedicated to the sacred visit of Guru, along with the map and photos of the place to his brother, S. Sewa Ram Singh the then Distt. & Session Judge, which was later on, published in book 'The Divine Master' by Sardar Sahib.

S. Kartar Singh of Sansarpur who stayed in Baghdad for some time shared his experience with the readers of "Pritam" a monthly Punjabi Magazine as well. This information has been referred to by many scholars including Sr.Surjit Singh Gandhi in 'History of Sikh Guru's retold'

Editor of "Gurmat Parkash" while writing in the Nov, 1962 issue said 'A Sikh Youngman, S. Satinder Singh on his cycling expedition reached Baghdad. He sent in the photographs of Al Sayyed Sharif Hussein, Al Rijavi Pakistani and the then Gadi Nashsin of Pir Behlol who helped re-erect the monument of Guru Nanak and the particular place where the Guru sat. These photographs appeared on page 114 -118 of 'Gurmat Parkash'. This Sikh young man also referred to a Sharma Ji who lives in one of the rooms of 'India Association' for the last forty years and makes it a point to guide every Indian to this place.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji proclaimed 'Ghar Ghar andar dharamsal....', wherever Guru Ji went he left behind a Sangat or a group of his followers and advised them to construct a place for their congregation. Dr. Kirpal Singh in '**Janam Sakhi Tradition**' says that 'Al Sabia or Sabian or Subi people lived in Iraq up till the sixties of the 20th century. They called themselves as followers of Guru Nanak. They were natives of Iraq and they lived in south Iraq. They maintained unshorn hair and beard. They were mostly Goldsmith by profession. He also refers to, Dr. Ganda Singh's article '**Arab ate Iran wich Guru Dharmavalmbhi, Subi te Abad.-1931**'. This contention has also been corroborated by Cultural Attache of Iraq in their Embassy in Delhi, who told that Al-Sabia's are not Muslims and Iraqi's do not consider them as such.

These Dharamsals were centers of religious and social affairs. Sh. Ruchi Ram Sahni has very deftly brought out the Guru's visit to Arabia (Persian Gulf) which reads as under:

'While returning from Arabia Guru Nanak left a sangat of Mohammedans converts to Sikhism in Mesopotamia. Descendants of these people, more or less still retaining some traces of conversion, were found by the Sikh regiments that went to fight in the last Great War. One of the Sikh commanders, writing to the "Loyal Gazette" of Lahore in January 1918

(quoted by Sr. Khushwant Singh as well), says that he saw the place commemorating the visit of Guru Nanak to Baghdad. Outside the city to the South-west, beside a grave-yard, there is an open room situated within an enclosure wall. In one corner of the room is a platform on which Guru Nanak is said to have sat, while he was conversing with Shah Behlol who sat on another platform in the opposite corner. The present priest named Sayad Usaf, who is in charge of the place, described himself as the tenth in succession to the first incumbent of the place. Certain words in Turkish dated 927 A. H.' are inscribed on the wall behind the platform (which were exhibited in the original and not shown here). The same account was sent to the '**Khalsa Advocate**', Amritsar, by Subedar Major-Sardar Fateh Singh-Assistant Censor in Baghdad in May 1918.'

Mahinder.N.Gulati while writing in "Comparitive Religions & Philosophies" says that though visits of Guru Nanak of Mecca, Medina & Baghdad are popular subjects of Janam Sakhi's being hagiographic. The Author personally visited the mosque-cum-Gurudwara structure in the midst of a graveyard in Baghdad. Prayers and worship in the Gurudwara was done on a regular basis with suitable adjustment of time. The significant point is that both Darbar Sahib & Mosque were and perhaps still are under one roof.

Iraq Government assured Sri Sri Ravi Shankar that the 15th century historic place, destroyed during the Iraq war shall be rebuilt by the Government, but nothing has come out of this assurance. My attention was drawn to a news item which appeared in the Tribune dated January 28, 2011 under the heading '**Guru Nanak Shrine lives on in Memories.**' This is reproduced verbatim for the reference of the readers:

"A desolate courtyard surrounded by fields of mournful graves is all that remains of an ancient shrine to Guru Nanak inside a sprawling Muslim cemetery in Baghdad. War insurgents or looters have wiped any trace of a historical footnote that had preserved the memory of Guru Nanak's 15th century journey through Arabia and his stay in Baghdad, hailed by Sikhs as an early example of inter faith dialogue.

"No one visits anymore," lamented Abu Yusef, the lean and bearded Muslim caretaker, standing in the nearby-bare patio where a disorderly stack of broken electric fans and a discarded refrigerator replace the prayer books and articles of Sikh worship that had furnished the shrine whose modesty mirrored the apparent humility of the man it honored. "Before the war, a few Sikh pilgrims would occasionally arrive," Abu Yusef said, referring to the US-led invasion that toppled former dictator Saddam Hussein and unleashed an unending cycle of violence. "Once or twice we even had western tourists. Last year, after a very long time, a Sikh man came from Dubai who promised to return and rebuild the shrine. But since then, nobody," he said with a resigned shrug.

When they came, the pilgrims would stay a night or two and convert the shrine into a temple, Abu Yusef recalled. "They slept in the courtyard, where they also cooked large quantities of food to share after worship with whoever came along," he remembered, pointing to the places in the roofless, sun-beaten enclosure with white washed walls and a plain concrete dais that had housed prayer books, painted portraits of the Guru and a prized stone plaque from the 16th Century. What is known about the origin of the site, which lies today inside central Baghdad's expansive Sheikh Marouf cemetery that adjoins disused train station where decaying railroad cars rest frozen on rusted tracks, is gleaned from scant historical sources. One is a Punjabi hymn by the poet and philosopher Bhai Gurdas, written several decades after the visit".

Though the war has vandalized the structure but its memory has been presented in the poem by Shri Anandacharya for all times to come.

It has been proved beyond doubt that the visit of Guru Nanak to Baghdad is a reality and not a myth.

September, issue of **'The Sikh Review'** and The **"Spokesman"** weekly Guru Nanak Number, 1956.

Footnotes

1. S. Khushwant Singh says that the Guru's last long journey was his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. He went farther west wards to Baghdad, where in he spent some time with local fakirs.
2. Guru Ji visited Baghdad during his fourth tour (Udasi), which he started in 1574 (1517A.D) with Mardana, according to S. Khazan Singh and in 1575 according to Giani Udham Singh. The latter says that the Guru reached Mecca by virtue of his spiritual powers. But Prof Kartar Singh asserts that Guru Nanak made his journey through sea route from Surat and the same has been corroborated by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh. 'The fourth itinerary of Guru Nanak was to the west. He was accompanied by Mardana. He traveled by Sea, and visited Mecca, carrying a prayer carpet under one arm, a book under the other, and holding in his hands an ablution pot and pilgrim's staff to complete the picture of a regular Hazi'. **(A Short History of Sikhs)- Editor**
3. Baghdad is 33 degree and 20 min North and 44 degree and 26 min East. There have been several proposals to its specific etymology. But the most reliable and widely accepted is: 'The name is a Persian language compound made of two elements; Bag "God" + Dad "Given", translating to God given or God gift' and also "City of Peace" according to Encyclopedia Britannica. -Editor
4. S. Khazan Singh says that the Guru said 'Patala patal' 'There are millions of nether and upper regions, and no one has found their limit. Only my God knows how vast the expense is.' And also refer author's Punjabi article 'Baba Ji Baghdad Gaye' in "Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya".- Editor
5. Bhai Gurdas says in Pauri 35, Var 1 about Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad.
 - From Mecca Baba went to Baghdad & stayed outside the city.

- The timeless (unending) eternal Baba was accompanied by Mardana; the rebeck player.
- He called for prayer in his own way and whole world fell into a trance.
- Whole city became quiet and observing this Pir was also numbed.
- Pir pondered over the situation and observed that a great exhilarated Fakir has arrived.
- Pir enquired which category (House) you belong to. (Enquired from Mardana as Guru Sahib was in meditation).
- Mardana replied: He is Nanak, the prophet; Fakir; God; Angel all in one, has come into this world & whole universe comprising this land & skies and all four direction are aware of it.

6. (a) The author of the article has referred to a conversation between Pir and Guru Sahib in his article 'Baba Ji Baghdad Gaye'. Pir having expressed his doubts about the negative effect of music leading to lustful desires; the Guru is said to have explained that the Ragas have a positive and a soothing effect on the soul. It is a divine language which is easily recognized by human race is capable of liquefying the stones; leaving aside the human race even the animals are attuned to the music and transformed. It is a gift which does not require any sign and language. Music gives us peace, solace and illuminates the soul.-Editor

(b) Dr. Gurvinder Kaur has referred to the definition of Gurbani as told by Baba Nanak to Pir Dastgir which is reproduced from 'Sikh Sacred Music' in her essay 'Sri Guru Granth Sahib Da Sangeet Parband Ate Gurbani-Kirtan', "Gurmat Parkash", August, 2008': It has been recorded in the Janam Sakhi (Bhai Mani Singh) that Guru Nanak Dev Ji was sitting under a tree on the out skirts of Baghdad. He started singing Shabad to the tune of Mardana's *rabab*. The crowd assembled and resented this unholy intrusion. The praying in musical tunes is forbidden according to the tenets of

Islam, Pir Dastgir; the priest of Baghdad came there, addressed the Guruji, "Music tends to divert the mind towards enjoyment of senses. It is therefore, not proper to use it for holy communication". Guru Ji replied, "Musical sounds originate from God. It is holy in every sense. The best way to worship God is to blend the divine words with holy music. The music is higher than the type of singing indulged in by some for entertainment." -Editor

7. (a) Dr Gopal Singh in "History of the Sikh People" vide FN on page 128 has this to say, Dr J. Tekin, Lecturer in Turkish at the Harvard University has however interpreted it thus:
 - (i) Look what was wished by the Glorious Lord in his Majesty.
 - (ii) That a new establishment built for the Saint Baba Nanak.
 - (iii) The seven gave help and there came this chronogram.
 - (iv) The blessed disciple performed a meritorious work. May He then recompensate it? -Editor
- (b) S.Khushwant Singh says: A tablet with the following inscription was discovered in Baghdad in 1916 'In memory of the Guru, the holy Baba Nanak, the King of Holy men, this monument has been rebuilt with the help of seven Saints.' The date on the tablet is 927 Hijri i.e. AD1520-1. (**Loyal Gazette, Lahore- January, 1918**)-Editor
8. The translation given by I.B. Banerjee is "Guru Murad died. Baba Nanak Faqir helped in constructing this building which is an act of grace from virtuous follower- 927 AH (**I.B.Banerjee, Evolution of Khalsa Vol.1, P 73**) Banerjee even throws a fantastic theory here based on his above translation namely, that Nanak had a Guru in the person of one Murad at Baghdad! (**Quoted in - History of the Sikh People by Dr Gopal Singh**)-Editor

9. Dr Gopal Singh says that Dr J.Tekin is of the opinion that figure 927H as shown earlier is now reads as 917 H, as the figure 2 has since mutilated and now reads more like the figure 1. At present there is no sign of the inscription but its presence has now been preserved for ever in the poem by Swami Anandacharya in his book 'Snow Bird'. Dr. Davinder Singh Chahal; Ph D. in his essay (**How long was Guru Nanak's travel to Middle East?-seen on internet**), says that, he got the English translation of the inscription done by Dr. Mehmedogus which reads as:

"Allah the Almighty willed that this monument or building of humble Baba Nanak will be a new benevolent foundation for dissemination of wisdom. Seven Saints came to help to erect the building on 917H"

He strongly asserts that the date on the inscription is 917 H and by sticking to this date, it can be established that Guru Sahib stayed in Middle East for 11 years and the meeting with Babar at Eminabad in the year 1520-21; as quoted by Historians of Indian history, is fully proved. - Editor

Snow Bird

By Shri Anandacharya

(Poem: on reading an Arabic inscription in a shrine outside the town of Baghdad, dated 912 Hejra)

The figure 912* seems to be misreading of the one given in original-Figure having been worn out and rendered obscure)

Upon this simple slab of granite didst thou sit,
discoursing of fraternal love and holy light, O' Guru
Nanak, Prince among India's holy sons!

What song from source of seven waters thou didst sing to
charm the soul of Iran!?

What peace from Himalayas lonely caves and forests
thou didst carry to vine-groves and rose gardens of
Baghdad!?

What light from Badrinath's Snowy peak thou didst bear
to illuminate the heart of Behlol hearkened to thy saintly
Persian disciple?

Eight fortnights Behlol hearkened to thy words on life
and the path and Spring Eternal, while moon waxed and
waned in the pomegranate grove besides the grassy
deserts of the dead:

And after thou hadst left him to return to thy beloved
Bharat's land, the Fakir, it is said, would speak to none
nor listen to the voice of man or angel:

His fame spread far and wide and Shah came to pay him
homage- but the holy man would take no earthly
treasures nor hear the praises of King and Courtiers.

Thus lived he-lonely, devoted, thoughtful for sixty winters, sitting before the stone, where on thy sacred feet had rested.

And ere he left his house to ignorance he wrote these words upon the stone.

"Here spake the Hindu Guru Nanak to Fakir Behlol, and for these sixty winters, since the Guru Left Iran, the soul of Behlol has rested on Master's word- like a Bee poised on Dawn-Lit-Honey Rose.

Macmillan & co, 1919

Guru Nanak: The Angel of Revolution

The revolution takes its birth in the minds of the people. Their minds are captured with new slogans and their energies are so canalized by a revolutionary as to bring about a revolution be it social, religious or political.

Kaiser William of Germany said that all movements were in reality political movements. This is true about the movements initiated by Guru Nanak. Dr G.C. Narang says that the sword which carved the Khalsa's way to glory was undoubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak who had obtained it, as it were, by smelting the Hindu ore and burning out dross of indifference and superstition of the masses and hypocrisy.

True revolution aims at obliterating the trials and tribulations of the suffering humanity and true revolutionary offers to expose himself to share the lot of downtrodden people, to feel and do away with their pains and pangs. Guru Nanak did so to show the worth of his name which according to Bhai Santokh Singh means one who has no pain. The two *Nuns* (Ns); occurring in the word, 'Nanak', in the words of Bhai Nand Lal, mean *Naeem* giver of bounties and *Naseer* (helper); and intermediary *Alif* (A) means *Haqqash* (unique God); and *Kaf* (K), the *Kabir* (the great). A European writer traces the origin of the Nanak in a Latin word *Nuncio* meaning an **Archbishop**, or a religious reformer; a true reformer is above animosity or prejudice against anyone. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha means Nanak by the word *Nirwair* occurring in the prologue *Mulmantra* of Japji.

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary describes, Angel as: A spirit who is believed to be a servant of God and sent by Him to deliver a message or perform a task. A popular Dictionary of facts and knowledge specifies: Personification of the powers and virtues of the Deity, sometimes used in a figurative, and at others

in a literal, sense. And a spirit includes mind, feelings and character rather than body. Guru was a born **Angel of revolution**, with countless qualities of courage, pious feelings, compassionate attitude, finest quality of head & heart; kind soul-for holy & pious purpose, ever conscious, monotheistic, tender, affectionate, harmonious, brave preacher, unique lover of mankind, and optimistic. It is in this context that the true Nankian philosophy of universal humanism has to be read and realized.-Editor

TL Waswani says that it is a Chinese word (probably connected with the **Nanking**, the famous Chinese town equivalent to fire). Verily his fiery spirit consumed what was unmanly and inhuman, and ultimately turned into a torch of Guru-ship to be handed over to his successor one after another till it fell into the hands of Guru Gobind Singh who saw that what was vital and refueled it with Promethean fire says Cunningham. To quote him further; Ramanand, Kabir and even Chaitanya who were all impressed with the nothingness of this life, aimed chiefly at emancipation from priest craft or from the grossness of idolatry and polytheism. They perfected forms of dissent rather than planted the germs of nations and their sects' remains to this day as they left them. It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform and to lay those foundations on which Gobind built a new nationality and gave practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest in race as in creed, in political rights as in religious hopes.

Savior of Hindus

Appreciating the success of Guru Nanak against the failure of his predecessor *Bhaktas* mentioned above, G.C.Narang says, 'He did not teach any thing new, but whatever he said bore the impression of originality and displayed the genius of master mind. He did not write long thesis and dissertations to establish his points or demolish his adversaries and did not quote *Manu* and *Vyasa* or the Koran and *Hadis*, but whenever he argued a point, his practical wisdom and strong commonsense always prevailed over the logic and theology of his opponents. The whole system of Nanak stands distinguished from other reform movements by two important peculiarities; its non sectarian

character and secondly its reconciliation with secular life. It leavened the whole Hindu thought in the Punjab and improved the moral and spiritual tone of the whole people. The appearance of Nanak was a great step towards arousing consciousness of a common nationality. He was the first Hindu hero who could command the allegiance of all parties because he did not identify himself with any party. Though he attacked all parties, tore their cherished beliefs into shreds he

became popular hero, because it was soon found that he was destroying only that which was not genuine but a mere addition or an accretion to their religion. [Transformation of Sikhism, page 26]

Mard-i-Kamil

But Guru Nanak was neither merely a reformer of Hindus of Punjab nor a Hindu hero of Punjabis. A great Muslim Urdu poet of Punjab also felt proud of the Guru rising from the soil of the land of five rivers, yet he found in the Guru, a savior of the sub continent at large, says Iqbal.

Phir uthi akhir sada tauhid ki Punjab se.

Mard-i-Kamil ne jagaya Hind ko phir khab se.

Late Prof. Humayun Kabir in his foreword of "The Sikhs today" by Khushwant Singh, wrote, "Guru Nanak was a great mystic who recognized no distinction of religion, race or creed. For him all men were brothers, and he had equal loyalty to Hinduism and Islam. In fact, Sikhism as it developed under his inspiration could very easily be regarded as Indian version of the Islamic faith, the insistence on absolute monotheism, abolition of caste and strong egalitarian tradition among the Sikhs are strong reminiscent of early Muslim society. Their devotion to Guru Granth Sahib is in many ways analogous to the Muslims regard for the Quran. In fact, Al-Quran means the book and Granth Sahib is almost a literal translation."

Concept of God

In the words of Dr.S S.Kohli, there is some similarity in the *Mulmantra of Adi Granth* and *Kalma of Quran*. The condemnation of asceticism is also similar, (The critical study of *Adigranth*). Guru Nanak revolutionized the conception of God by

describing Him as *Wahiguru*, a compound word consisting of *Wah* (Equivalent of Arabic word *Subhan*) and *Guru* a Sanskrit word meaning an enlightener- the Almighty, discarding the trinity of God propounded by Christians and Hindu thinkers i.e. *Guru Brahma*, *Guru Vishnu*, *Guru Devo Maheshwara*, referred to by the *Guru* in *Pauri 5* of *Japji*. To be more realistic in his conviction of creed of monotheism, he, like an excellent mathematician, put the never changing in value the first figure-one before the name of God, *Oamkar* which resembles to *Kalma*, "*Laillah Illillah*" (**There is but one God**). Unlike the Vedic pronunciation 'a+u+m' the *Guru* pronounced it as *Oamkar*.

Then he gives us ten characteristic of His: The real (*Sat*) the spirit (*Nam*) the creator (*Karta*) the controller and enjoyer (*Pururkh*). Beyond restraint, the spontaneous (*Nirbhau*), beyond any eternal antagonism, the Harmonious (*Nirvan*), The timeless (*Akal*) the embodied (*Murat*) one yet not subject to generation and cessation (*Ajuni*), the self existing one (*Saibhang*). To him we can attune ourselves through the *Guru's* grace (*Satguru parshad*).

Sachiara

According to Sikh belief the whole of *Japji*, the first composition of *Guru Nanak* and opening one of *Guru Granth Sahib*, explains the *Mulmantra* and reveals the ways and means through which the man can become a *Sachiara*; the real *Man* emerging his self in the divine light, in his life time, which formed the nucleus of the revolutionary thoughts of the *Guru*. Against the prevalent theory he declared that *Man* is not a born sinner or saint. The world is not storehouse of pain or privations, rather it is God's abode. Religious beliefs are not sufficient to make a man; a Hindu or Muslim. Only his actions make him as such. *Guru's* slogan was, '**there is no Hindu, no Muslim**,' which meant firstly that judged by their actions most of the people were not true Hindus or Muslims, because he witnesses that:

Cannibals say the prayers (Namaz)

Thread wearers ply the dagger. [Asa-di-var]

At Mecca he told *Qazi Ruknuddin* that without good actions both Hindus and Muslims would come to grief on doomsday.

This was very significant because in those days of Muslim ascendancy, rulers did not tolerate equating Hinduism with Muslim religion. A learned Brahmin's tongue was pulled out on his saying that both Islam and Hinduism were good.

Society in those days had no respect for women. Islam would not allow her to become Imam leading the congregation for saying prayers. Shakespeare named her frailty, Tulsi the representative poet of sixteenth century deemed the fair sex punishable like *shudras* and cattle against which the Guru raised his voice saying 'why the mother of Kings, be slandered like this'.

Fair means for Good ends

The Guru was deadly against meaningless rites and customs, and that too performed with foul means. He condemned the notion that it was just and proper to perform the *sharad* ceremony even by begging, borrowing or stealing. He brought home to the people that means employed for performing a religious rite should be fair says he, in Asa Di Var:

If a robber robs a house and offers the proceeds of his theft to his departed ancestors. The property will be recognized in the next world and will bring charge of theft on the ancestors. Justice will require that the hands of intermediary Brahmin may be cut off. Nanak, we get hereafter only what we give out of our hard earned substance.

Dignity of Labor

His socialism was based on the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of Man. He enjoined upon his followers to know and call everybody a *Bhai* or real Brother. Bala and Mardana were his brothers and for that matter Lalo and Jhanda the carpenters, Hasso; a blacksmith, Shihan; a tailor whom the Brahmin assigned a status lower than that of his, merely for their being artisan. These honest manual laborers were exalted by Guru for dignity of their labor. In one of his travels he was accompanied by Siho and Saido Gheo Jats whom he honored by

authorizing them to administer baptism on his behalf. Siho baptized Kauda, the cannibal and Saido gave Pahul to Raja Shivnaubh of Sangaldeep (Jaffna) –an action challenging the monopoly of Brahmins in this field.

Anti -Imperialist

To counteract the spell caused by saying of Tulsi and men of his ilk- **'It matters little to us that any body whosoever rules the country'** and to arouse dormant energies of slave Indian nation, he told the people ignorant of their birth right to win freedom, **'If we live without self respect all that we eat is undeserved.'** Guru Nanak never subscribed to the Brahmins Ishwar contention that "Emperor of Delhi was God itself" *'Wa Dilish waro wa'*², and never recognized the divine rights of Kings. He termed the Rajas as man eaters and their functionaries (*Mukaddams*) as dogs. He held Lodhi rulers responsible for the rape and rapine committed by the invading armies of Babar which was the result of negligence of Indian ruler.

It was crime on their part not to anticipate and check invader's advance. At the top of it instead of preparing for fighting the enemy with modern weapons they depended upon the occult powers of Pirs and Faqirs. The Guru says that not a single Moghul soldier lost his eye sight due to curse of Indian Muslim divines. The Lodhis were defeated because they employed the primitive and out of date weapons, bows and arrows while Babar used guns which frightened the elephants of Ibrahim creating chaos and turmoil in Indian army's columns. The Guru is pointedly critical of this aspect of failure of Lodhi government. He is quite right in asserting that no one would shed tears at the death of Emperor and failure of his empire.

To Babar, he advised to treat himself no longer an alien or invader but an Indian, in case he wanted to establish his raj. He should win the hearts of Indian prisoners of war by setting them free, needless to say Babar did value and follow his advice and history bears testimony to this. 'But for those who have read Babar's power, influence and formidableness, the patriotic part played by the Guru does not stand in need of comments. He met the most terrible man on earth, a wink of whose brow was a sufficient order for putting millions to the sword and by his able

intercession turned him into the kindest ruler'. This was the service Guru rendered to his country and countrymen.

[Ramanand to Ram Tirath, page 230]

Thoreau says that we should fight against any vice even sanctioned by Law. Guru Nanak challenged the divine privilege of learned Brahmin to be above impeachment. He says, in Asa-Di-Var 'We cannot spare an educated sinner merely for his learning and impale instead of him an innocent saint who is unlettered'.

ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਗੁਨਹਗਾਰ ਤਾਂ ਓਮੀ ਸਾਧ ਨਾ ਮਾਰੀਐ॥

Economic Exploitation

Another thing against which the Guru revolted was economic exploitation by various vested interests. There were Qazis the law givers who took bribe from defendants and plaintiff was denied justice. This tantamount to deprive one of his right, privilege or share due to him. According to Guru to misappropriate the share of others, is eating beef for a Hindu and pork for a Muslim. The Government recovered Jazia from Zimmies or Hindus. In the words of Guru, Brahmins and cows were taxed. Priests for their own benefit presided over religious ceremonies which cost the people heavily. In case of thread ceremony the Guru compares the price of thread (four kauris, a fraction of a pice, with huge expenditure incurred on the ceremony which included serving of mutton to the relatives invited on the occasion.

Then there was *Sutak- Patak*, impurity caused by birth and death which was removed by certain rites performed by the priest. The Guru told that the belief was unfounded, for the birth and death took place according to God's will. Rasdharis staged the life story of Lord Krishna just to earn their livelihood. They were told to witness the real drama staged by nature in which the various division of time, *Gharis* and *Pehars* acted as Gopikas and Kahans.

Besides all this, there were mendicants and ascetics like Jogis who shirked manual labor, and counting upon the simplicity of the compassionate common folk went round begging for food.

The needy Mullahs to readily receive alms turned their houses into new mosque:

**Gian vihuna gavey geet
Bhukhe Mulla ghare masit
Makhttu ho ke kann parae
Fakar kare hor jat gawae
Gur pir sadae mangann Jae
Takke mul na lagiay pae..... [Page-1243]**

These idlers were mainly responsible for creating vacuum in the economy of the country. On one hand rich were growing richer and on the other poor were getting poorer.

Ill fares the land hastening to decay.
Where wealth accumulates and men decay. [Goldsmith]

Sajjan the robber and Bhago the blood sucker were made to realize that the wealth could not be amassed without sins and it did not go with the dead to the next world. Those who shirked work were taught the dignity of labor and importance of sharing the earnings with lesser fortunate sections of the society. In Guru's opinion to toil for the betterment of the world was a passport for heavens.

Vich duniya sev kamaiye, Tan dargeh baisan paiye

To those who repaired to jungle and caves it was an eye opener. They were assured that they could comfortably and conveniently live in the so called word of Maya as a swan lives on the turbulent waters and lotus stands in a dirty pool. To set an example the Guru successfully performed amidst his oneness with God the functions of a herdsman at Talwandi, a *Modi* (An official/Store keeper) at Sultanpur and a farmer at Kartarpur. There is a Punjabi saying that the best profession is farming. The second best is trading and worst of all is service. The Guru owned all of these callings without any prejudice. His advice to men of various occupations mainly consists of honesty of purpose and faith in God:

To a Farmer:

Let the mind be the farmer and good actions farming.
Let the body be the field and water it with hard work.
Let the God's name be the seed and contentment be the levelling.
Put the fence of humble living to protect the field.
Deeds of affection will enable the seeds to sprout.
Indeed they are fortunate who have such a field.

To a Shopkeeper:

Let the fluttering time be your shop,
True name be the stock in trade.
Divine thoughts and consciousness be the vessels, to store the precious wares.
Have dealings with the men of God, to gain profit and attain real happiness.

To a Service man:

Put your heart and soul in service.
Have faith in God and perform your duty.
Let control your evil urge, do the task gracefully, so that all have praise for you.
The Lord will then see you through His grace.
And the glory will be enhanced manifold.

Widely traveled Prophet

To broadcast his thoughts he unlike the prophets and seers content merely with giving sermons at a monastery, he took to extensive traveling visiting a hut of an artisan- hermitage, a leper's house, a mansion of a millionaire, a pauper and a prince alike. He talked to them in their own language. Shankracharya and Namdev from south visited Northern India. Perhaps the Guru was the first prophet from North to visit not only South, but East and West in India and also abroad.

To give practical shape to his philosophy of truth, love, unity and liberty of mankind he settled down at Kartarpur after four long travels almost round the globe. He had founded the colony in 1521, at the bank of Ravi named after God the creator of universe (Kartar). It was an island of purity and virtue in the sea of sin, injustice and vice. Here was the school to train the man to

become *Sachiara of Japji's* conception in the light of Guru's theory: 'Truth is above all, but still higher is true living.'

Here Guru Nanak established *Sangat* (Community of men of God) and *Pangat* that is community of people who believed in equality of Man without consideration of caste, creed, or social status and par-took food in a common kitchen that is langar and that too in mediaeval age of rigid caste system. It was also here that he composed some of his celebrated hymns, Japji, Asa-Di-Var, Onkar, and Sidh-Gosht in Punjabi, the language of people instead of Sanskrit.

Bold and unparalleled Action

Of those who drank deep at the master's feet was one Bhai Lehna shopkeeper of Khadur Sahib, who worshipped Vaishno Devi. His service, sacrifice and disciplinary conduct in acting upon Nanakism impressed the Guru so much that he rechristened him Angad that is his own *Ang* or flesh and blood of his own body. According to another opinion Guru Nanak bestowed this upon Bhai Lehna when he found him in firm footing as a rock, determined to attain perfection in Sikhism like 'Angad' a Character of Ramayana whose foot firmly set in the court of Ravana could not be shaken even by the Monarch of Lanka himself. Satta and Balwand alluding to this characteristic of the Guru's say, 'Thou remainst unshakable like Sumer mountain amidst the lashing storms' (*Jhakhar wao na dolayi parbat Meru'*)

The Guru anointed him as his successor merging his light of Guru-ship with Lehna's soul. This last step of his was also revolutionary keeping in mind the general rule of succession on hereditary basis in those days. By-passing his eldest son, he chose Bhai Lahna on his merit. Guru's courageous act of bowing at the feet of a disciple was against the general practice of prophets. He in the words of Satta and Balwand made the river Ganga flow in opposite direction. This wise step made history. In the words of G.C Narang had Nanak died without a successor, there would have been no Sikhism today or at best simply another Kabirism.

[Transformation of Sikhism, footnote at page 27]

His thoughts, beliefs and teachings being ultra modern and aimed at good to all (**Nanak Nam Chardi Kala, Tere Bhane Sarbat da Bhala**) are as new, novel and appealing as they were five hundred years ago. They are as equally apt and true to provide guidance to the man of twentieth century for imparting nobility to his life as they did to his counterpart of fifteenth century.

To quote Duccan Green-leas, history shows that however clever it may be, no eclectic philosophy has survived much beyond the generation of its invention, yet the personal influence of Guru Nanak on his disciples is certainly no less today than it was two hundred years ago and may even be held to be growing warmer and more devotional. [The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib]

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Footnotes

1. Prof Sahib Singh says that Oankar has been adopted from OM, which was used in up-nishads. Based on the Mandukaya Upanishads, there are three letters in the form of prosody in the word a+u+m, which is to be uttered as such.

a: Stands for the state of wakefulness, which we experience externally through our mind and organs.

u: Stands for dream state in which inwards experience are available.

m: In the state of deep sleep, represented by sound M, there is no desire and consciousness is gathered in upon it self.

A very elaborate description has been given by Swami Krishnananda says he: 'what a grand description of Om is given in Mandukaya Upanishad! Whatever is in time, as past, present and future, is OM. Om has two fold

nature, temporal and eternal: it is Sabda and Sabdita. It is constituted of A + U + M, representing all creation; but it has also a fourth nature which transcends these distinctions of AUM. It is called amatra, the immeasurable and chaturtha bhava: The soundless form of Om is amatra, the immeasurable, eternal nature of Om is not a sound or even a mere vibration, but is just existence, pure and simple, known as Sachidanand-Savrupa: Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. But Baba Nanak proclaimed that the energy of universe ie creative, sustaining and destructive is incorporated in in one **Akal Purkh**. The same is amply revealed in Jap ji: “**Eka mai jagat viaie-Tin chele parvan-Ik sansari Ik bhandari Ik laye diban**” -Editor

2. This has been referred to by the author in view of uncalled for adulation of rulers on the throne of Delhi by the Brahmins during Muslim rule. This term was coined during the times of Emperor Shahjahan by the Brahmins of Delhi. It was the same during Lodhis' and from Babar to Aurangzeb.-Editor.

Date of Birth of Guru Nanak (Traditional versus Actual)

Those who make history seldom care to write it. In case of Sikhs attempts have been made by non-Sikhs historians, both Indian and foreign to write deeds of these brave people who shaped the destiny of the land of five rivers; from Sujan Rai to Hari Ram Gupta, from Mohsin Fani to Latiff and from Malcolm to McAuliffe, a chain of writers has come to exist who are well known for their works biased or unbiased. Besides these, Sikh scribes from Bhai Gurdas to Khushwant Singh have also made their contributions. The task accomplished by these scholars pales into insignificance when one comes across divergent views expressed on a particular point. For instance we may take the date of birth of Guru Nanak, the foundation stone of edifice of our history.

After Bhai Gurdas it was the anonymous author of 'Puratan Janam Sakhi', also known as Wilayat Wali Janamsakhi or Hafizabadi Janamsakhi, who wrote the biography of the founder of Sikh religion. The next Sikh writer was Bhai Mani Singh. Both these historians are unanimous in asserting that Guru Nanak was born at Talwandi of Rae Bhoie on 3rd day of Shukal Paksh of Vaisakh, Samvat 1526 Bikrami i.e. 15th April, 1469.

In the case of Guru Nanak whose 500th birthday anniversary we are going to celebrate next year the disputable point is the month of birth which has been dealt with at length in the shape of a thesis "Kattak Ke Visakh" by Sardar Karam Singh Historian holding Baisakh Sudi Teej 1526 Bik (April 15, 1469 A.D corresponding to Saturday, the 2nd Shawal 873 Hijri) as the correct date. The earliest source of this date is Puratan Janam Sakhi which is said to have been written in the time of Guru Hargobind Sahib (1595-1644) says; '*Sammatt 1526, Baba Nanak Janmia Visakh mahey tritita channi rat, Amrit vela pehar rehandi ko Janmia*'. It means that Guru Nanak was born in the rein of Bahlol Lodi (1451-1478) in Bikrami Year of 1526 in the month

of Vaishakh, in the last quarter of third moon lit night. The date was adopted by Baba Mehrban son of Pirthi Chand and nephew of Guru Arjan, in his Sakhi, Bhai Mani Singh author of 'Janamsakhi Guru Nanak Ji di', and also by the author of Mehima Parkash, Gurmat Ratnakar Mahan Kosh by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, Sikh religion by McAuliffe, A short history of the Sikhs (1469-1765) by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh etc.etc. The celebrated author S. Khushwant Singh has also adopted this date¹.

Bhai Santokh Singh who claims (in his celebrated work **'Nanak Parkash' completed on Kartik Punima, 1880 Bik;**) to be attempting at purifying the milk of biography of the Guru polluted by flies of lies and fallacies, and Cunningham whose famous work was published in 1849 found the date shifted about six month forward and accepted the month of Kartik (October-November) as the month of Guru's birth. How it happened is a long story. To cut it short Bidhi Chand Hindalia, a descendent of Bhai Hindal who was a prominent and devoted Sikh of Guru Amar Dass, was out to uproot the Sikhs and Sikhism with assistance and the patronage of the then government officials. In the dark days of Sikhs in eighteenth century, he claimed to be Guru and established his head quarter at Jandiala which he made to be known as Jandiala Guru just like Guru Harsahai, the headquarters of descendents of Baba Pirthi Chand². Besides acting as spy of the Sikh activities he took up the job of destroying or distorting the original works of early Sikh writers. He got prepared a biography of Guru which came to be known afterwards as Bhai Bale Wali Janamsakhi³. It contained such derogatory and false statements as Guru Nanak after returning from his visit to Kabul stayed again with Bhai Lalo at Eminabad where he married the daughter of one Hayat Khan Manjh. She was made known as Bibi Manjhot and gave birth to a girl. This book attributed to the fair name of Bhai Bala said to be a life time companion of Guru Nanak, so as to mislead the simple minded Sikhs to take it as genuine biography of the great Guru, even in its revised and refined form now available is a bundle of unbelievable theories some of which were ably exploded by S. Karam Singh. The author of Janamsakhi so cleverly and craftily

led the people to accept it as a gospel that even Bhai Santokh Singh could not resist the temptation of opening Nanak Parkash with presenting Bhai Bala as reciting the holy tales of Guru Nanak at the court of Guru Angad. Sardar Karam Singh endeavored hard logically that Bhai Bala was a fabulous man produced by rich imagination of the author of Janamsakhi and that attribution of a well at Nanakana sahib to his name was equally false.

Because, according to Hindu belief, children born in Kartik which is held an inauspicious month, are considered unlucky, their stars proving inauspicious towards their parents, and the author of the Janamsakhi put Kartik Purnima (15th of that month) as the date of the birth of Guru instead of Vaisakh Sudi Teej⁴. The Sikhs of eighteenth century being engaged in their struggle for existence had no time to take notice of such things. By the passage of time it got so vogue currency that Giani Sant Singh a great scholar, tutor, theologian and Sarbrah of Darbar Sahib, Amritsar in the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was easily taken in. The Sikhs of Nineteenth century having acquired power and self lost their holds on beliefs and fell an easy prey to dogmas and rituals from which their fore fathers were rescued by the Gurus. Kartik Purnima is sacred day for Hindus and Bodhis who have adopted it as the date of birth, salvation and death of Gautam Buddha. Bathing Ghats of the country like Ram Tirath in Punjab attracted on this day thousands of people to have a dip in holy waters just for the sake of rituals. Majority of the ignorant Sikhs followed suit. Giani Sant Singh to divert their attention from this direction, taking cue from the Balewali Janamsakhi, asked the Sikhs to celebrate the birth of their Lord on that day which in fact was about six months later than or ahead of that date. Strangely in the year 1816 A.D. Nanakana Sahib witnessed the first celebration of Guru's birthday in Kartik.

About a century after wards, McAuliffe attributed the switch over to Kartik to convenience of Sikhs, just like in the case of celebration of martyrdom of forty Muktas at Mukatsar on the first of Magh. In both cases the discarding of actual dates was explained away by saying that majority of Sikhs who were farmers were busy in reaping the harvest, they could ill afford to

go in the hot season to such far flung places like Nankana(Sahib) and Mukatsar(Sahib)

Dr L. Ramakrishna (Mrs. J.N.Madan) of Jodhpur says in this connection, "After having gone through the records carefully, we come to the conclusion that Kartik Purnima most probably was Guru Nanak's spiritual birthday or the day of his enlightenment" and it is for this reason that the birthday celebrations are held on this day. (page 95- Maharaja Ranjit Singh centenary volume issued by centenary celebration committee Cawnpore (Kanpur) 1939). This is merely a conjecture which seems to have grown putting Guru Nanak at the level of Gautam Buddha who in the words of Dr. Khuda Dad Khan attained Budhahood while Guru Nanak was a born Buddha. If at all the Kartik Purnima is taken as the date of Guru's enlightenment while bathing in the *Veiy*n, a rivulet at Sultanpur Lodhi, the celebration should have aptly taken place there at Santghat instead of Nankanna Sahib.

Cunningham says he came across two different dates of Kartik 13th and 18th. Later date is found in Gurparnali by one Kesar Singh (other than Kesar Singh Chibber author of well known Bansawali Nama). S. Randhir Singh, Editor of Guruparnalian published by the Sikh History Society, Amritsar, commenting on it says that that Kartik Purnima in 1526 Bikrami fell on 21st day of that month.

Bhai Kesar Singh puts the date of Guru's ascension as Asuj Vadi 10, 1596 Bik which is generally accepted as correct, but also very strangely says that Guru lived in this world for 70 years 5 month and 7 days which is also a fact. But this length of life of the Guru is arrived at only by accepting Vaisakh Sudi Teej as the date of birth:

Year	Month	Days
1595	6	9
1525	1	2
<hr/>		
70	5	7
<hr/>		

By adopting the Kartik theory the span of Guru's life becomes less than 70 years as shown below:

1595	6	9
1525	7	21
<hr/>		
69	10	18
<hr/>		

It is true that some supporters of Vaisakh theory give different dates of that month as the date of Guru's birth. We have it from Bhai Kahan Singh⁵ that Lala Thakur Dass of Balakot has in his possession a Janam Sakhi (in Distt Hazara) and written in Jeth 1600 Bikrami, The date is given as Baisakh Sudi 5, 1526 Bikrami which seems to be a slip of pen. Another school of thought i.e. Panchkand scholars put it as first of Baisakh proper which fell on Chet Shudi Teej 1526 Bikrami. They further contend that according to Table 1 of 'Indian Calendar' the date corresponds to Sunday the 27th March 1468 (Khalsa Parliament Gazette) which is perhaps due to adoption of *Gat* instead of *Vartman* type of year in calculating the date. It seems the learned scholars are actuated by the words of Bhai Gurdas '*Ghar ghar andar dharmsal howai kirtan sada wasoa*' in putting the first day of Guru Nanak's birth. But the calculation of Sardar Karam Singh and Dr. Ganda Singh which have generally been accepted as more correct and authentic give us the date as 15th April 1469. Taking the date of Guru's date of death as 22nd September, 1539, the length of Guru's life is correctly arrived at 70 years 5 months and 7 days.

Years	Month	Days
1538	8	22
1469	4	15
<hr/>		
70	5	7
<hr/>		

In all fairness we should accept the version of history and discard the tradition adopted for the sake of convenience, in

words of McAuliffe or for some pressing need of the hour considered advantageous by Giani Sant Singh some 150 years ago. Time has rendered both meaningless. Is it not ridiculous on our part to celebrate the birth anniversary of our Lord on a day other than that generally accepted and mentioned in books? One is really put in awkward position when he is confronted with the variation in his profession and practice. The time has come when it is decided once for all whether we accept the version of history or continue clinging to traditional myth. Just as the real place of birth of Maharaja Ranjit Singh whether it is Gujranwala or Badrukhan is being probed into by learned scholars of history of Punjabi University, this issue may also be referred to them by S.G.P.C, and then that body decide the date on which 500th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak be celebrated in 1969. Surely it will be a step which will go down in history as revolutionary.

Editor's note: My late father (S. Ranjit Singh 'Kharag', author of the subject essay) a very sincere, dedicated and devout writer was very critical of anomalies and paradoxes, that have crept in the Sikh history and wrote extensively to negate these misconceptions. He was very passionate and ardent student of Sikh history. His own words; which appeared in "Daler Khalsa" (Punjabi), Lahore (Guru Nanak number, 1945), are reproduced here with to drive home the point.

"Four years back, the 'Khalsa Brotherhood' of our office, celebrated Guru Nanak birthday on Kartik Purnmasi. Sir Teja Singh Malik, the then Chief Engineer of Central Public Works Department was the president of the association. On this occasion prominent personalities, among them Sardar Sant Singh MLA, Mr. Anne and Khawaja Hassan Nizami were invited. The speakers stressed the need of the hour to maintain unity and create communal harmony. Khawaja Sahib was more vocal; he identified himself to be very near Sikhs; being a direct descendent of the daughter of Baba Farid Sahib of Pakpattan. Later on after completion of ceremonies and light refreshment, a tract in English was distributed (depicting the actual and traditional date of birth of Guru Nanak). Before departure, a Tamil officer called our president and pointing towards the date of birth of Guru Nanak Sahib inquired the correctness. Our

president having said yes; the officer had a hearty laugh and later expressed his displeasure and said; then my dear Sardar Sahib all this is humble and fuss. And this was enough to numb us completely.

This was the very idea which made him a staunch supporter of a Sikh history society. And he advocated the idea of a project to clear the paradoxes that have crept into the Sikh history; because the educated and knowledgeable elite of other community were very critical of such misconceptions and a negative publicity ensues. And the outcome of two books by Sr Karam Singh 'Katak Ke Vaisakh' and 'Gurupurab Nirnay' has not been very encouraging. This was the very idea of writing this article. These anomalies which have crept in during the survival period of Sikhism have to some extent been settled.

There is an interesting story referred to by the author in 'Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya' for celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday during Kartik. Its background is traced to the Singh Sabha movement, the Govt of the day enquired about the day of celebration of Guru's birthday. The leaders of the Singh Sabha entrusted the matter to Bhai Haribhagat Singh, Head Granthi of Gurdawara Shahidganj Lahore. The Granthi ji in his wisdom prepared two chits by writing Kartik and Baisakh on each and placed it before Guru Granth Sahib and a child was asked to pick up one, the fortunate chit bore Kartik word and the celebrations being in Kartik month. Hence the tradition set in for celebrating Guru's birthday in Kartik as quoted by McAuliffe, that the tradition of celebrating Guru's birthday is as per convenience of Sikhs.

Way back in 1957, Sardar Randhir Singh, Research Scholar in 'Sikh Itihas De Partakh Darshan' also advocated switch over to solar calendar for celebration of Gurpurbs, to off set the confusion in dates as per lunar calendar. He has given the date of birth and death of Guru Nanak as:

Birth: - 1525 Bk, 29 Baisakh sudi Teej, 25th April, 1469.

Death: - 1595 Bk, 10 Asu vadi, 18 September, 1538.

(He has quoted Bik samat as gat and to convert it to vartman 1525 may be read as 1526)

The author again made a fervent appeal to settle the issue of date of birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji once for all in 1968 as well, through his article which appeared in Gurmat Parkash.

A few years back Sardar Pal Singh Purewal also authored a research paper depicting the traditional, modern and his own views based on 'Jantri 500 years' authored by him, based on solar calendar. His paper approves the views expressed by my late father way back in the year 1945, 1954 and 1968 and a galaxy of other writers. He says, "Guruji's correct birth date is Vaisakh 1, 1526 Bk (Vaisakhi day) Monday, it also being Chet Sudi 15 (Poornmasi). The Common Era date is 27th March, 1469. This date may help reconcile the two differing proposing schools. If the highest religious authority accepts this date, then it would have to decide whether to celebrate Birthday Gurupurab of Guru ji on Vaisakhi or on Poornmasi".

Dr Kirpal Singh while writing in 'Analytical Study of the Janamsakhi Tradition' has summed up that except Bala Janamsakhi all other accounts such as Puratan Janamsakhi, Mihaarban Janamsakhi, Bhai Mani Singh Janamsakhi (old manuscript), Guru Nanak Bans Parkash of Sukhbasi Rai, and Mahima Parkash by Sarup Das Bhalla all support Baisakh.

What is desirable and what a layman expects of galaxy of these learned scholars is to let him out of the labyrinth of the confusing dates. Till recently Nanakshahi calendar had been in vogue, which was incidentally accepted by our NRI's as well. Again certain amendments have been made and Guru Nanak's birthday is being celebrated as per lunar calendar. It requires a very sincere effort by the religious body to settle this issue by fixing a date for all times to come. Sikh religious body has made the things more confusing and hotchpotch by issuing addicts with the result that Guru's birthday is celebrated by different Sikh religious bodies according to different calendars. I conclude this note in the shape of a prayer by S. Khazan Singh "that God, the Almighty, may grant the Khalsa nation more energy and enlightenment so that they may be able to prosecute and conduct their research in a wiser and more methodical way".

Now date of birth is not that important. What is desirable that we should stick to a date once for all and celebrate his birthday universally as in the case of Christ.

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Footnotes

1. The celebrated author S. Khushwant Singh has this to say vide FN on page 28. 'The Guru's birthday is celebrated on the full moon night of the month of November. This is based on the Janamsakhi (biography) of Bala Sandhu, which is considered by most scholars as spurious. But for the sake of tradition no change has been made in the date of celebration. There is no doubt that the correct date is April 15, 1469. The more reliable Janam Sakhis agree that 'in Sambat 1526, in the month of Baisakh on the 3rd day of the first quarter of the moon, in the early hours of the dawn, three hours before sunrise, was born Baba Nanak'. This is confirmed by Mahima Parkash and all other accounts, which are agreed on exact span of his life and date of his death-which, worked backwards, fixes the date of his birth as April 15, 1469. -Editor
2. Dr Gopal Singh in his celebrated work '**A History of the Sikh people**' says vide foot note on page 34 'And this is so because in Sikh credo, it is not the dates of birth and death that are of prime importance, but what they signify and impart to the historical process. Or, it is that as Meharvan's own father, Pirthi Chand, was November born, he could not detract from its importance by giving about the same birth date to Guru Nanak? -Editor
3. S. Khazan Singh the author of 'History of Sikh Religion' says vide page 30 that 'A reference to Janam Sakhi by Bhai Bala shows that it was written about six months after the death of Guru Nanak; the Guru having died on Vadi 10, Assu Sambat 1596, whilst that Janam Sakhi was commenced on Sudi 5 Baisakh, 1597 Sambat. The compilation of the book prima facia, took considerable

time, say two months and 17 days. Its preface shows that Har Dayal, the family priest of the Guru, used to tell people that the Guru was born on the full moon day of Katak. Har Dayal was the writer of the Guru's horoscope which was procured by Guru Angad. It corroborated the date which was told to the Guru before its production. He further says that there are some who think that the Janam Sakhi terms that Bhai Bala is a mere forgery, and no such person ever lived or went in company with Guru. They assign different reasons for their suspicion, and in some cases they support their conjecture by Vars of Bhai Gurdas. He further says that he has studied most of the authorities and has digested them. There seems no reason why such a forgery should have been committed, and the reasons they advance to support their views are inadequate and he could rebut them all. Says he further that one of the authorities to the contrary is Bhai Mani Singh's declaration that Guru Nanak was born on Suddi 3rd of Baisakh Sambat 1526, which corresponds with 1st Baisakh 1526. The Bhai does not quote any authority. Properly speaking the Bhai's work is not a biography but a commentary on the Vars of Bhai Gurdas, who lived in the time of fifth Guru. The date of Guru Nanak's birth occurs in his commentary on 22nd verse of the first Var. He appears to have been misled by the 27th verse of the same Var or some other biographies as will be explained hereafter. The 27th verse runs, as follows:-

"Ghar ghar andar dharmsal hovai kirtan sada visoa."
 'Each house shall contain a dharmsal with perpetual recital of the laudation of the Lord, like Baisakhi or Hindu New Year's day'. He says that it is an adjective qualifying the Kirtan and means that the laudatory hymns shall be perpetually recited in every house as on the happy and joyful New Year's day (1st Baisakh). That is every day will be equal to New Year's Day for the purpose of such recitations. In no case it goes to establish that the 1st of Baisakh was given by Bhai Gurdas as the Guru's birthday. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha authenticates the above version in 'Mahan Kosh'-Editor

4. The dread of Kartik gained so much prominence that pregnant women expecting delivery in Kartik month were driven out of their home by in-laws. Certain influential and rich people used to give away the expecting lady in charity to a Brahmin and buy her back for a consideration. Refer writer's article in '**Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya**'. Prof Kartar Singh M.A. vide page 306 says that despite distortion of accounts of Guru's life as early as 1640 AD; yet the birth anniversary of Guru continued to be celebrated at Nankana Sahib in the month of Baisakh up to 1872 BK(1815-1816 AD) -Editor
5. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha gives the life span of Guru as 70 years 4 months and 3 days and his date of birth as 15 April, 1469 and his date of ascension as 22 Sept, 1539.-Editor

Guru Nanak: A Scientist of the Realm of Spirit

According to Herbert Spencer, *Science is organized knowledge*. In other words, science means following a set plan in search of truth. Guru Nanak realized, saw, smelled and told boldly the truth. He, in the words of Banerjee, 'was a revolutionary who aimed at upsetting the cherished institution of society in which, he was born, bringing about a social cataclysm and building a new order on the ruins of old'. He gave meanings to the common things like alms, chastity, teacher, bargain, nature and religion, etc. Thus, he, says Cunningham, extricated his followers from the accumulated errors of ages, and enjoined upon them devotion of thought and excellence of conduct as the first of duties.

In the words of Dr G.C. Narang, 'the Guru tried to emancipate the Hindu mind completely from the fetters of mythology. It was he who taught the Hindus after long ages that there was not only one God, but **He** was free from the bondage of birth and death, that **He** was alone Vishnu, alone Brahma, superior to Shiva and the creator of Rama and Krishna'. (Transformations of Sikhism, P 38)

In Japji, he sang that as sky needs no support (bhai vich aadaanay aakaas) so nether regions are not supported as commonly believed by a bull (*Dhaul*) or by a tortoise (*Kuram*). Rather Guru Nanak stressed that the stability of society depends upon Man's contentment and good actions, which arise from compassion to our fellow men, the down trodden and the distressed. Performance of good deeds and humbleness is the hall mark, if you aspire to achieve goodness.

**Dhol dharma daya ka put
Santokh thap rakhia jin sut (Page-3)**

According to Hindu mythology the earth is resting on the horns of white bull. If the earth is settled on the horns of a bull and where does the bull stands? Similarly he exposed the hollowness of many beliefs and superstitions of his time. His approach and outlook in doing so were rational, reasonable and scientific. It was generally believed that that there were seven skies and seven subterranean worlds, Islam puts the number at eighteen thousands, (*Sahas athara kaihan kateban*), and also that there were only two heavenly bodies – the Sun and the Moon. Guru Nanak said there are hundreds of thousands of nether and upper regions (*Patalan patal lakkh agasan agas*).

Hindu mythology says that the earth is resting on the back of a tortoise and another version says that it is supported by Sheshnag. And Muslims tenets say that universe, skies, heavens and hell were created by the Allah and Guru Sahib vehemently rejected all these theories and said:

**Dharti hor pare hor hor
Tis tey bhar tale kavan jor (Page 3)**

There are many other scientific truths which he utilized to illustrate his teachings. To use, Prof Dana's words, 'Science and the Holy Granth are undoubtedly the priceless heritage of man. To me Science is an attempt to unravel the deep hidden mysteries of nature and holy Granth is a very glimpse into the motive of things. It, in fact is a peep into the Eternal, the Changeless, lying beneath the curtains of time and change. It does not end with the present as science does, but it embraces, unfolds the wonderful.'

Guru Nanak, while condemning the hypocrisy of rituals and rites connected with the cooking square, untouchability etc pointed in Asa-di-Var that water contains bacteria and grains of wheat are active with life.

**Gohey atai lakri andar kiraa hoey,
Jetey daney ann key jiaa bajh na koey
Pehla pani jiu hai jit haria sab koey.**

(Asa-di-var, mehla 1, Page 472)

Sir Jagdish Chander Bose has now been credited for this discovery.

The fact that moon is dark and cold and depends upon the sun for light is brought out by the Guru when he says that the sun enters the chamber of moon – *Sas ghar sur samaya*’ - just as the spirit is animated by God.

Sabh meh jot jot hai soe,

Tis-dai chanan sab meh chanan hoe.

(Dhanasri Mehla.1, Page130)

It will be interesting to know in this connection the views of Sir Anand Sarup, the founder of Dayal Bagh, Agra. While writing at page 8, of ‘Yatharth Parkasha’ Part iii, Vol ii, he observes thus: “Once the writer of these lines had the occasion to go to Timarni in District Hoshangabad (Madhya Pradesh). A young Sikh who was employed some where near Jabalpur came to meet him. He asked for permission to put a question and when this was given, he enquired regarding the writer’s opinion about Guru Nanak. The reply given by writer was that **“he was an incarnation and had manifested on this earth to do good to mankind.”** The Youngman retorted, but he was not a scientist. The writer said in reply that he was a scientist. Upon this the Youngman asked for some proof to show that he was a scientist and he was told in reply that Physics is not the only science, there are other sciences also; in addition to Physics e.g. Chemistry, Botany, etc. Those who know these sciences are also known as scientists. Similarly there is another science, the **science of spiritualism** and those who know this science are also entitled to be called Scientists. And Guru Nanak was not only fully acquainted with the science of spiritualism but was an expert in it. To call him a scientist is therefore not only quite reasonable, but also quite appropriate.”

The Youngman further asked “But scientific instruments are required for scientific investigation and discoveries. Were any scientific instruments used by Guru Nanak? If so, what?

Obviously there was no idea even of any scientific instrument in his time."

And the writer replied, "Instruments of different kinds are used for the purpose of increasing the powers and reach of the five knowledge-senses, the mind and intellect of the man. It is with the help of this increase in powers and scope of his faculties that the man is able to find out such hidden secrets and laws of nature which do not ordinarily come within the purview of his vision and intelligence. However, as the spirit i.e. The *Atma* and *Paramatma* are not physical substances, therefore, knowledge-senses, the mind and the intellect of man as well as physical instruments which are useful in finding out the secrets and laws of the physical world are of no use in man's attempt to know the realities of those non physical substances and secrets. Just as benign providence has provided man with physical senses, intelligence and the faculty of discrimination to know the physical world and to establish contact with it; it has also provided him with spiritual senses, intelligence and faculty of discrimination on the spiritual plane to enable him to know about the spiritual world and to establish contact with it. Thus Guru Nanak was fully conversant with the secrets of these senses and faculties and by making use of these, he had discovered the hidden secrets of the spirit and the working of the spirit just as any Professor of Physics makes discoveries about any physical substance."

On hearing this answer the heart of the young man was filled with great respect for Guru Nanak and he said that the people with whom he had to live and work were learned scholars of Satyarth Parkash and as they criticized the knowledge of Guru Nanak, his belief in Guru was shaken.

To further illustrate and elucidate the concluding contention of Sir Anand Sarup, it can be added that Guru Nanak being an expert and perfect in spiritual science, needed no instrument for investigations and discoveries because truths were already known to him. He has, however, planned to set up a laboratory-a small workshop for the guidance of the Sikhs where in they may work

hard to obtain the nectar of *Nam* and mint the coin of *Shabad*, the Name. Here is the description of workshop with its instruments.

Let continence be the furnace and patience the gold smith. Let understanding be anvil and spiritual learning the hammer (tools). Let fear of God be the bellows and austerity the fire, and let love be the crucible, in which pour down thou- the Ambrosia. Thus in the true mint wilt thou coin the *Shabad* - the *Nam* -The Divine name -Amrit Nam. (Pauri 38, Jap Ji)

ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ ॥ ਅਹਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਥੀਆਰੁ ॥
ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ॥ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ ॥
ਜਿਨਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਤਿਨਕਾਰ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥38 ॥

The Guru blesses those who toil successfully in this work shop of Amrit Nam, as did Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Taru Singh, and several others. Guru Nanak showers his blessings on such people in these words.

Jinhi nam dhiya gaye musaqqat ghal,
Nanak te mukh ujje keti chhuti nal.

They who lived in Nam have departed, with hard toil for ever ended. Such are the faces that shine with resplendent, beauty, O' Nanak. They are free and myriads of others along with them.

The "SPOKESMAN" Weekly, Guru Nanak Number 1959.

Addendum by Editor: The scientist in Guru Nanak is of a very high order and his acumen for a systematic research into social behavior is to be understood with a peep into his times. He watched the people in society, gave a clarion call for social & economical change. He asked them to shun the dogmas and rituals to become a Sachara & follow the Japji for a virtuous life. He laid down a moral code and stressed on the purity of life.

His realm: an area of activity, interest or knowledge, was in liberation of souls. He vigorously aspired to remove ignorance out of the masses. No doubt they were ignorant but he could not ignore them because he was sent by Almighty to transform the vice ridden people through the subtle and sublime nudges of his Bani into a *Sachiara*.

The scientists prior to the year 1865 denied the existence of God and now they found the God as indispensable for a rational and scientific explanation of the diverse phenomena going on in the universe. Materialism and Determinism, has wide implication on the humanity at large. These two words have been discussed in wider context by Sir Arthur Eddington, says he, 'those household gods of nineteenth century science, which believed that this world could be explained in mechanical and biological concepts as well-run machine, must be discarded by modern science to make room for a spiritual conception of the universe and man's place in it. The old Atheism (belief in non existence of God) is gone. Mind is first and most direct thing in our experience; all else is merely remote inference; religion belongs to the **realm of spirit and mind**, and cannot be shaken." Quoted by Prof. Kartar Singh in 'Guru Nanak Dev, Life And Teachings'-Editor

Prophet of the People

Introduction

In the words of Prof. Khuda Dad Khan, Guru Nanak was a born Buddha i.e. enlightened. And the Enlightened Nanak was sent by God to preach and teach the people to come out of the labyrinth of evils and vices prevailing at the time of benevolent Nanak. Idolatry, priest craft and greedy indulgence of ruling class in niggardly acts was rampant in society. His approach to set the things in order was simple, straight and linear. His elementary offer was based on the sound principles of the prophetic revelation, at Sultanpur. His teachings based on the Fatherhood of Man and Brotherhood of God: have been proved invariably time and again. His *Bani* expounds some of the aspects of psychology, economics, politics and human relationships. His *Bani* is cherished by humanity, even after more than 480 years. And Nanakian philosophy shows the correct path to the ailing humanity to become **Sachiara** of his Jap-ji. His primitive revelation "**Na ko Hindu-na-Muslaman**" is the foundation stone of this huge edifice of Sikhism. According to Oxford dictionary, **Prophet** is a person who teaches or supports a new idea, theory etc. Guru Nanak was a sobre and moderate poet of people and bard of the God: who sang his praises and taught the ignorant people of their duty towards family and society. The sanctity of his *Bani* is lotus-fresh that places utmost importance on the purity of life and a onetime prescription for all evils rampant in society. Moral code for the humanity holds a very prominent place in the *Bani* of Guru Nanak. To broadcast his message of morality and path of *Nam* and *sahaj*, he travelled across the country and abroad. Verily he is called the **prophet of the people**.-Editor

The author wrote the subject article in the year 1966 and "**Guru Nanak: The Angel of Revolution**" in the year 1969.

Interestingly the first Para of both the articles is identical. I have retained its originality. -Editor.

The revolution takes its birth in the minds of people. Their minds are captured with new slogans and their energies are so canalized by a revolutionary as to bring about a revolution, be it social, religious or political.

Kaiser William/Wilhelm of Germany said that all religious movements are in reality, political movements. This is true about the movement initiated by Guru Nanak. Dr G.C Narang says that the sword, which carried Khalsa to glory, was undoubtedly forged by Gobind but the steel had been provided by Guru Nanak who obtained it, as it were, by smelting the Hindu ore and burning the dross of indifference and superstition of the masses and hypocrisy.

This is one of the many phases of great personality of Guru Nanak whose first slogan was: "There is no Hindu, no Musلمان." He was the **prophet of the people** of the universe, revered both by Hindus and Muslims, as goes the saying: "**Baba Nanak shah Fakir, Hindu ka Guru, Musلمان ka Pir.**" He has been hailed as Jagat Guru in a folk song: "**Sabhna da sanjha Nanak sabhna da yar wo**"

With what respect, honor and love the Muslims of Iraq remember the Guru is evident from the inscription in a shrine outside Baghdad noticed by Swami Anandacharya. The inscription describes the Guru as "Hazrat Rabbi-i-Majid Baba Nanak Aulia, Allah", the highest honor the Mohammedans can confer on their saints and saviors.

He was born in Punjab; the land of five rivers, which since the Vedic times is famous for its progressivism, patriotism and adaptability to circumstances however odd they may be. He saw the rule of Lodhi Dynasty, advent of Mughals and rise of Sher Shah Suri which he had himself predicted saying: 'They (Mughals) will arrive at the scene in 1578 Bikrami era (1521 AD) and their rule will come to an end in 1597 (1540 AD) that is with in less than twenty years.'

Being protector of lowly, weak and downtrodden, he denounced imperialism in strong terms calling the kings as butchers. He was imprisoned by Sikandar Lodi for refusing to

show a miracle and by Babar when he sacked Eminabad in 1521 AD. He scolded the invader on his face for killing the innocent, assaulting the women (both Hindu and Muslims) and setting fire to houses and crops, and made him realize the woes and weal's of his countrymen and got them freed by the invaders.

This patriotism of his and his voluntary enslavement in Rohilkhand for the liberation of slaves is a part and parcel of his universal love and sympathy for the mankind at large. Bhai Gurdas says that the Guru envisioned the whole universe on fire of discord and he set out to reform the ailing humanity. He reclaimed Sajjan *Thug* who strangled his victims to death after stripping them of their belongings; Chatur Das; a renowned Pundit of Benares, Kauda; the cannibal of South India; Nurshah-the magician queen of Kamrup; Qarun of Egypt; Pir Dastgir of Baghdad; and Jiwan a high priest of Mecca, in the same merciful way as he treated the leper of Dipalpur. This is why he has been described as the true and great physician of spiritually sick and mentally afflicted," **Aa gia Baba Vaid rogian da**" (Lo! there comes Baba, the divine doctor).

Guru Nanak adored the creator of the universe and loved His nature and creatures of all climes and countries. He visioned God reflected in his creation. Says he: **"Jat maihi jot, jot maihi jata."** Children fascinated him as he considered them more deserving recipients of his affection. Tender hearted, with receptive mood like clean slates as they were, he imparted gladly and kindly his teachings to theses **"fathers of the men."** Baba Buddha came into contact with him in his childhood. It was, therefore, but natural that when traveling through Mekarn he could not resist the temptation of joining the merrily-dancing children of that place in their play. This was one of his ways in which he propitiated God. Another was of uplifting the lowliest of the low by propagating the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of Man to their logical end. Marx's followers have accepted the man as a comrade where as Guru Nanak had practically behaved as a brother and called everyone as **"Bhai"** (brother).

In Sri Rag, he sang: **"Nanak keeps the company amongst the lowest of lowly, intend not to emulate the celebrated.**

Know that where the fallen have been protected-His grace and his goodness are seen.” page-15.

ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ ॥
ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ॥ 4 ॥ 3 ॥

He would prefer to stay and dine with Lalo, a laborer, and refuse to partake the sumptuous dinner at the palace of Malik Bhago, a local dignitary, who had amassed wealth by sucking the blood of the poor. He told him plainly that those, who chose to rule are fools (**Hukam karehe murakh gaawaar**), for there is only but one master (Maru). To take pride in belonging to so called high families and castes is non-sense. He elevated Lalo by appointing him to the first *Manji* which was to spread Sikhism in Northern India. Puratan Janam Sakhi, edited by Bhai Vir Singh says that the Guru in one of his travels took with him one Hassu; a blacksmith and Shihan; a tailor. In another, he was accompanied by Saido and Siho; Gheo Jats, whom he honored by asking to administer baptism on his behalf. Siho baptized Kauda, the cannibal and Saido administered Pahul to Raja Shivnabh of Sangaldeep (Jaffna).

Guru Nanak did not like those who, unmindful of their duties towards their family, society and country, left for jungles to obtain salvation. He even did not spare the highly placed *Sidhs* and *Yogis* who were supposed to lead the people in those dark days. Admonishing them for their hiding themselves in the caves of high mountains (Which they called and considered to be heaven), he said to them: “So now who will rescue the world?” (*Sidh Chhap baithe parbatin kaun jagat kou par utara*-Var 1, 29, Bhai Gurdas). He impressed upon the people not to look towards these so called leaders, as passport to heavens; the other world could be obtained only by serving the mankind in this world.

Similarly, he was critical of the hypocritical priestly class for having a false hollow of reverential awe just because they were learned. Said he: “The learned who was greedy, vicious and

proud; was a fool and it was not just to punish an illiterate saint for the follies of a learned one."

The Guru condemned those who despised their mother tongue and used the language and adopted the fashions of their foreign masters by putting on blue dress just to please them and obtain their favor. Said he: "**Ghar ghar Mian sabhna jia boli avar tumari**" and "**Nil bastar pehre banvari.**" To end monopoly of the priestly class in the field of divine knowledge preserved in so called Dev Bhasha, he chose to compose hymns in the language of the people written in an alphabet which became to be known after him as Gurumukhi. In the words of G.C Narang, the very name of the new script, therefore reminded those, who employed it, of the duty towards their Guru, constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the common mass of Hinduism, that they were regenerated, liberated and saved. It also dealt a powerful blow to the domination of the priestly class.

The third effect of the introduction of this new alphabet was to increase the number of literates and thus making religious literature accessible to the masses in their mother tongue, to facilitate the reform work of the Gurus.

According to a Persian poet, poetry is characteristic of a prophet. Poetry as an art, in the words of Collin Wood, is the community's medicine for the worst disease of mankind, the corruption of consciousness. Verily, Guru Nanak was a prophet and the poet of the people. His hymns are tuned to nineteen musical measures. To give music to the people, he invented a six stringed musical instrument known as *Rubbab*. In the words of Luther, music is the art of prophets, the only art that can calm the souls. Music is the most glorious gift of God which removes from the heart weight of sorrow and fascination of evil thought. The poetry of Guru Nanak is found in Ragas the popular among the people both Hindus and Muslims. He kept in view their taste in composing *Baramaha*, *Alahanian*, *Ghorian*, *Var* etc.

After completion of his *Udasis*, sometime in the year 1526, as per Dr Gopal Singh, Guru Nanak came to Kartarpur, situated on the west bank of Ravi and founded the present city of Kartarpur (Now in Pakistan). The revered and famed Guru

finally settled here, and the infinite reputation of benevolent Baba attracted people and they flocked to him for spiritual enlightenment. Kartarpur became an interactive forum for exchanging notes on self enrichment and meaningful participation in society, resulting aggrandizement of this new abode of Baba Nanak. Religious discussion and discourse ensued. It was here that Guru Sahib initiated Sangat & Pangat in true mode irrespective of caste, creed, low & high. Everyone was free to eat & sit together, a revolutionary & masterly step taken, unheard of earlier. It was here that he warned the idlers that there was no free lunch.

Last but most revolutionary in its character was the step taken by the Guru to choose his successor from amongst the people, he was Bhai Lehna, a village shopkeeper, who worshipped Vaishno Devi. Guru Nanak elevated him to a sky high position of Guru ship, the Guru bowing low to the disciple, an act unparalleled in the history of religions. In the words of bards Satta and Balwand, Guru by so acting made Ganga flow in opposite direction and Lehna occupied a seat in the divine shop of Guru Nanak that is the throne of Guru ship.

- **Horin-u gung vaha-i-ai duniya-i-eei akhai ki kion.
Nanak Isar Jag-nath uch-hadi vain viri-kion.**
- **Lehne dharia chhatar sar asman kiara chhi-kiun.**

It was the very divine shop which was termed as shop of falsehood and which Jahangir decided to close for good. The decision resulted in Guru Arjan Dev being crowned as the first and great martyr. Jahangir is no more but the divine shop (Modi Khanna) of that great Modi, is still flourishing with brisk business, with customers from all climes and countries. It will go on prospering for ever because the divine shopkeeper believes in the welfare of the mankind and keeps at heart the good of all creatures of God.

**Nanak nam charhdi kala
Tere bhane sarbat da bhala.**

The "SPOKESMAN" weekly: Guru Nanak Number, 1966

Guru Nanak's Contribution to Adi Granth And Economic Problems

Guru Nanak was divine poet and a bard of God who wrote for the humanity at large and set his composition to the musical measures. His poetry has the freshness of dawn, music of cosmos, cadence of silver bells, and simplicity of a song and the flow of a stream in it. Union with the beautiful is the burden of his songs – the yearnings of a lovelorn soul. He pines in love of God as does the devoted wife for the loving embraces of her spouse, the '*chatrik*'¹ for rain drops, the '*chakvi*'² for the sunrise, the '*chakor*'³ for the full moon and the fish for water etc. These pictures are tinged with the intensity of his spiritualism, and the greatness of the divine is apparent, whose sermons lead us to become a *Sachiara*. The pictures lift us above our desires and here in lay the greatness of the poet, for the same metaphors in the hands of poets of lesser caliber, smack of sensuality and serve only to sharpen the edge of our low desires.

Mool Mantar & Japji

His writings are preserved in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the volume of which is more than three times the contents of Rig Veda. It is also known as Adi Granth to distinguish it from the Granth of Guru Gobind Singh's –Dassam Granth. There in, his poetry occupies the first place. His contribution are marked as Mahalla Pehla (the first person merged in the light of God), somewhat in the way Yajurveda indicates the name of authors of its mantras. Duncan Greenlees (1952) says about Sri Guru Granth Sahib "considering it (SGGS) not only as a religious book but perpetual embodiment on visible form of the mystical person of Guru. SGGS is the Guru's own book through which he speaks to his disciples from age to age. Thus it is also Gurbani – The Guru's voice. He, who attentively reads, sings, listens to its

hymns, is brought into direct contact with the Guru who is, in a very real sense, Incarnate in these hymns”

The Granth opens with his composition ‘Jap Nisan’ which forms the key note of the Granth and all that Sikhism inculcates to transform the man into a *Sachiara*, the true servant of humanity. He starts very ably and efficiently by aptly putting the first figure-One (1) to denote the oneness of the Almighty, a thing unparalleled in the world of scriptures. Then he puts nine adjectives describing His qualities including *Nirbhau* and *Nirvair*.

His name is Truth, The all pervading Creator, without fear, without hatred, immortal, unborn, self existent; He is revealed by grace of the Enlightener (Guru). True in the beginning, True throughout the ages, True even in death, true ever; Nanak and forever shall be true. Such was the Nanak’s idea of the creator. (Fredrick Pincott)

The Japji is artistic, philosophical and introvert poem which leads you to a metaphysical state and transforms you to become a True person i.e. *Sachiara* The Guru then proceeds to present a bird’s eye view of the world’s evolution and gradual ascent of the human soul from the region to region and ends with escorting the Man to the divine presence in these words: “*Nanak nadiri nadar nihai*” (He thrills you, Nanak, with His gracious gaze).

It has 40 verses (2 shaloks and 38 pauris). This is followed by small piece, *Sodar Sohila* and *So- purakh* which contain seven verses of the Guru. Then we witness a panorama of verses attuned to thirty one ragas of India, ragas from north and south and ragas of yogis and Muslim Fakirs, ragas of six seasons and ragas sung at their proper time to produce a particular atmosphere and effect. To quote Prof G.S.Tandon the ragas of Guru Granth Sahib are apt to reproduce the voices of various bird’s, beasts and reptiles.

Rag	Equivalent sound of Animal
Majh	Hans Dhuni (Swan)
Gauri	Nag Dhuni (Serpent)
Assa	Miyur Dhuni (Peacock)
Gujri	Kaushik Dhuni
Wadhans	Jhankar Dhuni
Sarang	Garur Dhuni (Eagle)
Malar	Lank Dhuni

Ramkali
Kanra

Kokil Dhuni (Cuckoo)
Bhramar Dhuni (Bee)

Ragas of Guru Nanak

The contribution of the Gurus, Bhgats and the Bards amount to 5894 verses.

Contribution by	Bani Beora	Ganda Singh & Taja Singh
Guru Nanak	974	976
Guru Angad	62	61
Guru Amar Das	907	907
Guru Ram Das	679	679
Guru Arjan Dev	2218	2216
Guru Teg Bahadur	116	118
	-----	-----
	4956	4957
Bhagats & Bards	938	937
	-----	-----
Total	5894	5894

Guru Nanak composed his hymns in the following *Ragas*:

Name of raga	No. of verses
Sri Rag	60
Majh	74
Gauri	40
Assa	172
Gujri	8
Wadhans	13
Sorath	18
Dhanasri	15
Tilang	7
Suhi	44
Bilawal	30
Ramkali	166
Maru	64
Tukhari	22
Bhairon	9

Basant	18
Sarang	39
Malar	65
Parbhati	24
Shalokas in Ode of Bihagra and Rag Kedara	4 = 892

Chhant /Bani –wise analysis of above:

Pada or Shabad	209
Ashpadian/Kafi	123
Chhant	25
Pehre (Sri Raga)	2
Patti (Assa)	35
Alahnian (Wadhans)	5
Arti (Dhanasri)	1
Suchajji, Kuchajji (Suhi)	2
Thitti (Bilawal) Suhi	20
Oankar	54
Sidh Gosht Ramkali	73
Solhe (Maru)	22
Baramaha (Tukhari)	17
Shalokas, Dakhne And Pauris of Vars	304

Sub Total	892
Add Japji	40
Sodar Sopurakh Sohila	7
Sehaskirti Shalok	4
Shalok other than those of odes	33

	976 ⁴

Out of above ragas, Wadhans and Ramkali are *Dakhni* ragas while others are *Uttri* (northern) ragas. Guru Nanak did not use the ragas of extreme effectiveness but blended them suitably within the above ragas to produce an atmosphere surcharged with dual effect e.g. *Gauri* with *Dipki Purbi*, *Suhi* with *Kafi*, *Basant*

18with *Hindol*, and *Parbhati* with *Vibhas*. In the fields of musical instruments, he invented the six stringed rebeck on which played his Muslim companion Mardana, to whom he addresses two 24shlokas in Var Bihagra.

It can be said without fear and contradiction that he is the =pioneer in making new experiences in the field of poetry and music. The basic idea behind composition of Japji is the creation of an 'Attentive Personality', which has been defined by him as a '*Sachiara*' in Japji, a '*Devta* (demi god)' in Asa-Di-Var, a '*Gurmukh* (an ideal Sikh) in Sidhgost and a '*Suhagan* in 'Tukhari Baramah'. Bani Beora says 'Asa' is his own innovation. He is the first to write *Patti Baramaha*, *Thitee Pehere* etc and introduce new forms of folk songs as Alahanian, giving them a tinge of hope and optimism. Contrary to the usual theme contained in the Baramaha which commonly ends in tragedy, the Guru's Baramaha is a comedy depicting union with God. This is his last composition during the last days of his life, when he was just to merge with the divine light and was filled with eternal joy.

Patti is believed to have been written when he was admitted to village school at the age of seven. It is addressed to the village school Master; Brij Lal. Its each verse begins with a letter of Punjabi alphabet. This is the one and only composition of his, in which he has given his pen name as Nanak Shaiyar⁵, or Nanak the poet, instead of Nanak simply. It served as a model to the later poets who wrote 'Paintees -Akhris' and 'Seeharfis'. The teacher was surprised when the Guru asked him the meaning of each alphabet. This was the first divine message delivered by Guru Nanak. Through *Pattis* the Guru explained the finer truth about human values and Almighty and the path to reach Him.

Vars (Assa, Majh & Malar)

He changed the conception of Punjabi ballad-Var by employing it for describing the struggle of the good for its existence against the evil. His three odes were included by Guru Arjan Dev in the Adi Granth with instructions that they be sung in the tunes of ancient ballads of Punjabi as indicted below:-

Srl.No	Ode of	Tune or Rag
1.	Var Majh	Malik Murid and Chandrahara Sohiya
2.	Var Assa	Raja Ass Raj (Tunde)
3.	Var Malar	Rai Kailash and Maldeo Ki Dhuni

This is somewhat similar to Viniyog, the way to pronounce the mantras of Yazur Veda. Asa-di-Var is sung daily by the Sikhs in the morning as Japji is recited. Both the composition are in chaste Punjabi, believed to have been composed by the Guru at Kartarpur during his last days, are part of morning prayer as they present almost the Sikh way of life. Asa-di-Var describes the relation of man with God and universe and that of God with nature: God pervades all nature by an art which is artless.

It denounces the tyranny of contemporary rulers thus:

“Sin is the King, greed the Minister, falsehood the mint master. And lust the deputy to take counsel with, they sit and confer together. The blind subjects, out of ignorance, pay homage like dead man.”

The Guru expresses similar sentiments when he condemns the Lodhis who failed to protect their subjects against the onslaughts of Babar in 1521, to them he brands as the bridegroom of sinful marriage party:

“The dogs i.e. Lodhis have thrown away the priceless inheritance, when they are dead no one will remember them with regard.”

It is a beautiful description of the caste bound and faith blind society of Guru's time, with expression of his views here and there as to what he considered to be Truth, Virtue and Right-Living. He exposes therein the false beliefs, the superstitions and strange practices that prevailed in his times, e.g., *Sutak*, *Sharadh*, *Janeyu* and false satisfaction of Muslims obtained through burying (and not cremating) their dead that they so escape the fire of hell. He does not spare the hypocrites amongst the Hindus and Muslims. He calls them cannibals:

“Manas Khane Kareh niwaj

Chhuri wagain til gal tag”

(Page-471)

As in “Arti” addressed to the priests of Jagannath Puri, herein he asks the *Rasdhari*s playing the drama of Lord Krishna to witness the real drama of *Kahan* and *Gopis* enacted daily in the form of *pehre* and *gharis* –division of time. Just like the sermon he delivered to Pundit Chatur Das and other Brahmin teachers of Benares in ‘Ramkali, Mahla 1, Dakhni Oankar’ bringing out the true qualities of head and heart of a true teacher; **“Nanak so parhia so Pandit bina jis Ram nam gal har”**. To enlighten his teacher of the intrinsic meaning of the Nam, he admonishes herein the professional priest who performs the Sharadh and marriage ceremonies on payment of ill gotten money.

In the end, he notices the lot of have nots vis-a- vis that of haves who comfortably rest in beds while the former stand by and wait. He stresses the need of seeking God’s mercy and blessings which is panacea of all ills.

Tina sware Nanaka Jin Ko nadir kare” (Page-475)

This is the burden of his entire writing throughout.

The greatness of Majh Di Var lies in the fact that Guru has addressed himself as Ballad singer (Dhaddi) of the Almighty and He, having been pleased with his masterly activity invited him and presented a robe of honor of divine praise upon him. The third Var which is sung in Malar Rag is Rag of rainy season and is also sung to eliminate the damaging effect of Deepak Rag as well. In this Ode (Var), the God’s own creation and the duel between forces of good and bad, right and wrong has been depicted. It has been pointed out that this var is to be sung on the tune of Rai Kailash and Maldey di Var. The Almighty has been addressed as banker and rest of the humanity as a trader.

Man, in the words of author of ‘Lust for life’ is not on the earth only to be happy, he is not there to be simply honest, he is there to realize great thing for humanity, to attain nobility and by-pass vulgarity. Verily Guru Nanak was the man who realized great things for humanity. The basis of his action in this direction

was his faith in man. He wanted Bhai Lalo not to be simply honest, but to free himself from the old rut and do something more than his routine business of carpentry carried on by him to keep his body and soul together. According to Prof Indu Bhushan Banerjee, Guru Nanak was a revolutionary who aimed at upsetting the cherished institution of society in which he was born, bringing about a social cataclysm and building a new order on the ruins of the old. He gave new meaning to the common things like alms, charity, chastity, teacher, pilgrimage, bargain, religion etc.

Instead of feeding the overfed and fat priestly class he gave food to the needier and actually hungry *bihangmas* or *darweshas* who like birds never carried their meals with them as the saying goes on “**palle rizq na banhde panchi te darvesh**”. He declared this action of his, true or good bargain (**Sacha Sauda**), unlike Kabir who rebuked his son Kamaal for bringing home money, he was not averse to money, rather he wanted it to be utilized for noble cause. He robbed Sajjan of his robbery and asked him to use his ill gotten money in serving the needy. He made Malik Bhago realize that he was a blood sucker and worst enemy of humanity in that he had amassed wealth through sins:

Papan bajhon howai nahin moyan sath na jai (Page 417)

He rebuked Babar and admonished Karoon of Egypt for their unquenching thirst for gold.

The economic condition of people of Guru Nanak's time, who in his words were blind beings bereft of eyes of knowledge, was no better than their social condition. Kings were man eaters and his attendants and servants were blood thirsty hounds. They sucked the blood of the people. On the other hand priestly class had invented ways and means to get money out of ceremonial functions. Says the Guru in Asa-di-Var:

**Sin is the king, greed the minister, Falsehood the mint
master,
And lust the deputy to take counsel with,
They sit and confer together.
The blind subjects out of ignorance pay homage like
dead men.**

Meaningless Ceremonies

Yagyo pavit, marriage and sharadh ceremonies were the main source of Brahmin's revenue. Sumptuous feasts with great pomp and show were held on these occasions, even at the cost of one's honor and honesty. Guru Nanak pointed the hollowness of the whole show put up in connection with the sacred thread ceremony by comparing it to the actual cost of the thread itself that was *caukar* or the four *kauris*, the smallest coins: "the thread is brought for four *kauris* and it is put on in an outlined place. With instructions whispered in the ear, the *Brahmin* has become *Guru*".

When the man dies, the thread falls off and he goes away thread less. Myriads of thefts, villainies, falsehoods and calumnies: myriads of deception and secret sins accompany the soul of the man night and day, and yet a thread is spun out of cotton, and the Brahmin comes to twist it. A goat is slaughtered, cooked and eaten; and then every body present says, 'Put on now the thread'. When it gets old, it is cast away and another has to be put on again."

ਲਖ ਚੋਰੀਆ ਲਖ ਜਾਰੀਆ ਲਖ ਕੂੜੀਆ ਲਖ ਗਾਲਿ॥
ਲਖ ਠਗੀਆ ਪਹਿਨਾਮੀਆ ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਜੀਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥
ਤਗੁ ਕਪਾਹਹੁ ਕਤੀਐ ਬਾਮ੍ਹਣੁ ਵਟੇ ਆਇ॥
ਕੁਹਿ ਬਕਰਾ ਰਿਨਿ ਖਾਇਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਆਖੈ ਪਾਇ॥
ਹੋਇ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ ਸੁਟੀਐ ਭੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਹੋਰੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤਗੁ ਨ ਭੁਟਈ ਜੇ ਤਗਿ ਹੋਵੇ ਜੋਰੁ॥੨॥੪੭੧॥

The charges paid to the priest for presiding over the marriage ceremony were not considered justified by the Guru as the daughter of his *yajman* should have been treated as his own: "**sai putri yajman ki sai teri.**"

As regards the sharadh ceremony it has all along been considered the foremost ritual of feeding the Brahmin in the name and memory of dead ancestor's. It is performed during the dark half of the month of *Asuj* called Pitri- paksha. Even Shah Jahan was all praise for the Hindus for their offering food in memory of their dead relatives. It is said that while imprisoned in

Agra fort he asked his captor son Aurangzeb for a cup of cold water which was refused. The disappointed and dejected king thus wrote to his son: 'Praise be to the Hindus who offer water to their dead. What sort of Musalman are you, my son who shirks to allow a drop of water to his living father.' The morale of the story is that instead of feeding the over fed priestly class in the name of your dead ancestors; feed the hungry, dilapidated, invalid, poor, sick and ailing people and above all respect your parents and elders; so that the money spent is justified.

The people sunk in the abyss of dogmatic tradition thought themselves to be duty bound to perform the rites out of fear of social condemnation and excommunication. They were compelled to do so whether they beg or steal. This action of theirs, apparently too good to their eyes, doomed the fate of the doer and the priest in the next world. Says Guru Nanak:

- **If a robber robs a house and offers the proceeds of his theft to his departed ancestors.**
- **The property will be recognized in the next world and will bring the charge of theft on the ancestors.**
- **Justice will require that the hands of the intermediary Brahmin may be cut off.**
- **Nanak, we get here-after only what we give out of our hard earned substance.**

Hypocrisy Condemned

Guru Nanak was justified in condemning the priest craft because the custodian of piety and ethics had steeped low by neglecting the sense of duty - *dharma* and morality - *sadachar* for sharing a few morsels of delicious food with those who devoured men and yet read the *Namaz* and those who piled the dagger and yet had sacred thread on their necks. The Guru says:

- Even *Brahmins* in such people's houses sound their conches,
- And enjoy their food as much as they themselves,
- They trade in lies with the capital of falsehood,
- And earn their food by speaking lie.
- They wear blue clothes in order to be acceptable to ruling class.

- They earn their living from those whom they call *Malechas*, yet they worship the *Puranas*.
- They eat meat of the goat killed in Koshar fashion with unintelligible words pronounced on it.
- Yet they allow no accesses to their cooking squares.

This was not all. The actors' *bajaris* who staged the lives of Lord Rama and Krishna made the performance to win their bread:

- The leader dance to the tune set by their followers.
- They move about their feet and shake their heads.
- The dust rises and falls on their hair.
- The people see and laugh and go home.
- For their bread the performer sway their movements to the rhythmic throb of the music.

Slavery to Foreign Language and Dress

Now we turn to the middle class Hindus of those days viz *Kashtriyas*, *Vashyas* etc; who had given up their religion and adopted the language of the rulers to please them. They took pride in being called Mian as the Guru Says:

**Ghar ghar mian sabhna jian
Boli avar tumari**

They wore blue robes to win the favor of rulers and get in service of the Islamic state. Guru exposes those petty Hindu officials by questioning the integrity of their conviction, conduct and character thus:

- You tax the cow and the Brahmin; you cannot be saved by cow dung.
- You wear a Lion cloth, a sacrificial mark, a rosary, yet you earn your living from those whom you call *Malechas*.
- You perform the worship in private, yet O'my brothers'. you read books of Mohammedans and adopt their manners.
- Put away hypocrisy.

Have and Have-nots

In this way masses were bled & white and priestly & ruling classes became fat. The rich were growing richer and the poor

became poorer. Guru Nanak brings out clearly the fact of existence of haves and have-nots in the concluding staves of Asa-di-war:

- God himself shapes the men as vessels and brings them to perfection.
- In some is put the milk of loving kindness; others are ever set on the fire of passions.
- Some lie down to sleep on cushion; others stand to watch on them.
- God regenerates those on whom He showers his grace.

It was but natural that the country in this wretched condition fell an easy prey to foreign invasion:

Ill fares the land hastening to ills a prey
Where wealth accumulates and men decay (Gold Smith)

On Amassing Wealth

Wealth cannot be amassed without committing sins and sinners must be punished. They had their severest punishment in the shape of Babar's invasion in connection with which the Guru Says, "Their wealth and beauty proved to be their enemies"

His job did not end with rebuking and admonishing his countrymen. He was a man of action; he himself became a captive of Babar to share the tribulation of the people and ultimately converting the brute invader into a benign king.

His Message on Character Building

His Asa-di War is not only a condemnation of imperialism both political and religious, economic exploitation and hypocrisy. As in Japji, a man aspiring to become a Sachiar is led to march on the road leading to *Sach-Khand*, Asa-di-war depicts the career of a man in the process of becoming an angel-a perfect man with noble action

**Balihar gur apne dio hari sad var
Jin manas te devte kie kart na lagi bar.**

For this purpose he gave the man; Sangat (community congregation), langar (community kitchen) and kirtan (singing in

chorus) because one's character is built up in honest and holy congregation.

He enjoined upon his followers to earn their living by sweat of brow and sharing their earning with others:

**Ghal khae kichh hathon de
Nanak rah pachne se**

Those who worked hard at their duty and apportioned their earning to charity shall find the way to salvation.

His Example

To give lead to provide an example for his disciples he settled like an ordinary farmer with his family and tilled the land at Kartarpur. Here once he acted in a way quite contrary to his performance of *sacha sauda*. Observing that some undesirable persons had come to stay at his institution with the sole object of partaking in the *langar* twice daily without any service or praying. When his advice "one who serves the people in this world will find a place in heavens" fell on deaf ear, the Guru ordered, it is said, that grains exceeding the quota sufficient for a week should be destroyed and the food distributed once instead of twice a day. This had the desired effect and the idle and greedy fellow left Kartarpur in search of some other avenue more beneficial. It shows that able bodied men partaking in Guru's langar should perform community service so that infirm and disabled might be fed through their labor – a unique principle of Guru's economics. Thus he actually did what he professed and preached where in lies his greatness.

Writing about the linguistic value of Adi Granth, Dr Trumpp says: "It is, on the other hand, in a great linguistic point of view of great interest to us as it is real treasury of old Hindi dialects, specimens of which have been preserved there in which are not to be found any where else. The Granth contains sufficient materials, which will enable us to investigate these old and now obsolete dialects, from which the modern idioms have had origin so that the gap which hither existed between the old Prakrit dialects and other modern languages of the Aryan stock may by a careful comparative study of the same be fairly filled"!.

Guru Nanak composed his hymns in Punjabi, Sadhukari or Sadhu Bhasha which is commonly misunderstood as Hindi though apparently it is, but actually it is not. Beside this, he wrote in Rekhta more akin to Persian but not Persian in itself, because it contains sadhukari words also:

Yak arz guftam pesh to dar gos kun kartar. P-721

Similarly his apparent Sanskrit shlokas are not such they are rather Sahaskriti as those of Guru Arjan:

Ek krishn'n t' sarv deva dev deva ta atmah

Atmam basavdevs je koi janesbhev. Asa-15/469

Nanak ta ko Dass hai soi Niranjan dev. Sahaskriti-13/1353

It is evident that in both cases (of Persian & Sanskrit). Guru Nanak did not use them purely as such. It will be interesting to note that in 'Arti', he used some words of Oriya as the hymns were meant for oriya people of Puri. In Patti, we came across the word Khudkar which was used by Bhagat Namdev also. It can very well be said that Guru Nanak embraced the whole of India Linguistically. It is indeed literature of the common man.

To say in the world of Payne 'the seed which Guru Nanak sowed produced richer harvest not because he expounded a noble philosophy or preached a purer morality, but because he adopted his teachings to the needs of human life, because he realized that what they failed to realize that a religion if it is to be a living force must be a practical religion, one that teaches mankind not how evil is avoided, but now it is to be met or overcome.

**Sikh Review, November, 1968 and The 'Spokesman' Weekly,
Guru Nanak Number, 1965.**

Footnotes

1. Chatrik: - Pied Cuckoo, who drinks rain water only. - Editor

2. Chakvi: - Rudy Goose or Brahminy Duck (Sukrkhhab in Punjabi as well), Legend has it that the couple separates at night and long for the sunrise to unite again. -Editor
3. Chakor: - Indian red legged partridge: It is lover of moon in myth and poetry.-Editor
4. Sikh scholars differ regarding the total number of hymns composed by the 1st Guru. The Guru Granth Sahib termed as 'Mr. Book' by Ripley's Believe it or not" is composed of 5894 hymns of which 976 hymns are credited to 1st Nanak. There is a difference in calculating the Padas/Shabds by each scholar. Bani Beora gives 974 and Dr. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh calculate 976 verses for Guru Nanak. Each scholar applies his own yardstick and gives a different account. There is a difference of two shabds, which certain scholars ascribe to Mardana Ji. Dr Rattan Singh Jaggi calculates 959 verses composed by Baba Nanak. Mahan Kosh gives the number of hymns by Guru Nanak Dev ji as 947 and the total of hymns and shabads as 5868. -Editor
5. For a detailed account of Guru Nanak's philosophy and Bani. Refer Authors Book in Punjabi "Nanak Shaiyar Iv Kehiya". -Editor

Guru Nanak and the Muslims

Emperor Jahangir had a complaint against Guru Arjan that the Muslims had embraced Sikhism. This was one of the count in which the Guru was martyred. Guru Arjan had invited Mian Mir, a celebrated Muslim divine, to lay the foundation stone of Hari Mandir Sahib at Amritsar and included in Guru Granth Sahib, the composition of famous Muslims as well as Hindu devotees of God, who according to Prof Arnold Toynbee, were held by the Guru to be Sikhs though they lived and wrote before the Sikh religion took institutional form. They were Sikhs, says Toynbee, because they brought out and emphasized the universal spiritual truths contained in their respective religions, traditions and these truths belong to all ages and to all faiths.

In this way Sheikh Farid, Bhagat Kabir, Bhikhan Shah and other Muslim Saints were Sikhs. It was, therefore, no wonder that the teachings of Guru Nanak attracted thousands of co-religionists of these Saints. They found solace and peace of mind in Sikhism. Their role in Sikh history is not inferior to those of Hindus.

Syed Budhu Shah sacrificed his two sons in the battle of Bhangani. There is a rare Chanwar still prereserved at Durbar Sahib Amritsar. It was presented by a Muslim Fakir who manufactured it out of the fine fibers of sandalwood remaining at work for a long time with devotion and love for the Guru.

Guru Nanak –A Nabi

The Muslims regarded the Guru as their *Nabi*. We have it on the authority of Pundit Lekh Ram Arya Musafir who happened to meet an Iranian Muslim Saint at Amritsar. During discussion with the former, the Saint said to him, "Guru Nanak has a holy book (*kitab*), following (*unmat*), Miracles (*Mo'jza*) and comrades (*Ashab*). His qualities are higher than those of

prophets. They are appreciated by the Muslims. He is, therefore, undoubtedly a Nabi."

Guru's teachings are meant for the mankind irrespective of caste creed or clan. He sympathizes with the afflicted and down trodden; whether they were Hindus or Muslims. His bounties and blessings made no distinction between the two. He equally admonished the Pandas' of Hardwar, Sidhas' of Sumer Parbat, Hamza Ghauns and Wali Kandhari. He taught true *Arti* to the priests of Puri and real *Azan* to the Pir of Baghdad. Hindus and Muslims were so to say, his right and left eyes and how truly has a poet said;

"Nanak Shah Fakir Hindu ka Guru, Muslman Ka Pir."

Daultan

His earthly life began with his contact with a Muslim lady. She was Daultan, the Nurse, first to receive the apostle of peace and harmony on the soil of Talwandi, now in Pakistan. She was astonished to see the radiant face of baby, and felt as if there was hustle and bustle and noise of trumpet and bugles sounding the arrival of a King. This was an extraordinary event which filled the heart of a village nurse with joy, light and love.

Teacher becomes Pupil

Guru Nanak was first sent to Pathshala of Brijnath for acquiring the knowledge of Sanskrit. Then according to Ghulam Hussain, author of 'Sair-ul-Mutakhirin', he was educated by one Muhammad Hussain, a neighbor of his father who was childless and loved Nanak. The Guru asked one day his teacher the real meaning of Arabic alphabet. On latter's nodding his head in negative, the Guru began to explain him the same like this:

**Alif -Allah nun yad kar. Ghaflat manon visar.
Saas je palte nam bin, dhrig jiwan sansar.**

(By first letter of alphabet that is: Alif we mean that we should ever remember the Almighty, failing which the life is useless)

Rai Bular

Next Muslim of note, who was blessed by the Guru, was Rai Bular¹, the ruler of Talwandi. He was one of those fine souls who found in the boy-Guru an enlightener of the world and one of the first outside the family. He had seen with his own eyes a king cobra holding his hood over the face of the Guru, sleeping in the scorching sun and mistaken by him to have been bitten by the reptile. He accepted him as his deliverer.

According to the ancient revenue records, in possession of family, Rai Bular gave 247 Murabas of land to Gurudwara Janam Asthan alongwith an annual Jagir of Rs 9996 and 220 Muraba and Rs 31 for Gurudwara Bal Lila; 290 Muraba & Rs 50 for Mal Sahib, totalling 757 Muraba. Incidentally one Muraba is equal to 25 Acre. All this property is leased to farmers and controlled by Evacuee trust property of Pakistan.

(Source: www.info-sikhkh.com/pageRai1.html)-Editor

True Islam

At Sultanpur Lodhi, the Guru was appointed the storekeeper of Nawab Daulat Khan. In response to call of humanity he gave up the job and took to reclamation of the fallen. His slogan was 'There is no Hindu and no Muslman,' which annoyed the priestly class.

A conspiracy was hatched to involve him in a case of dishonesty and embezzlement of government money while he was in service of the Nawab. He was imprisoned and the cell where he was confined is known as Kotha Sahib. The court of law acquitted him, but communal bigots would not forgive him. They were still active to get him lowered in the eyes of Nawab.

As he declared himself above the communal or religious distinction, he was invited to participate in prayers at a mosque. The Guru went there gladly, but remained there sitting alone and exposed the hollowness of actions of both Kazi and Nawab. He told them the definition of a true Muslim.

"Make mercy thy mosque. Let faith and sincerity be thy prayer carpet and what is just and lawful be thy holy book. Let humanity be thy circumcision, sweetness of behavior thy fasting, thus shall thou be a true Mohammedan. Let virtuous

deed be thy Kaaba; truth thy spiritual guide, charity thy creed and prayer and quiet unruffled temperament thy rosary. Do all this, my friend and God will bestow honor on thee."

Sikandar Lodhi

Sikandar Lodhi, a ferocious bigot, was another ruler who put the Guru behind bars. He had received information that a fakir, whose tenets were different both from the Koran and the Vedas, was openly preaching to the people and that importance which he was assuming, might, in the end, prove serious to the state.

(S.M.Latif, Page 243)

Like all prisoners Guru Nanak and Mardana were sent to work at the hand mills and given corn to grind. The Guru did labor for a time. The sight of weak and innocent men of God doing labor far beyond their physical strength under the fear of the jailor, at last touched the Guru's heart. He bade Mardana to play the rebeck, for the word of God had come. He sang one of his beautiful soul stirring songs. All the prisoners forgot their mills and ills and the wardens their duty of enforcing labor. There gathered, in the prison, a crowd of outsiders which was really a danger to the state. Sikander on hearing this came and begged of the Guru forgiveness for his past deeds. The Guru told him that forgiveness could be obtained by sincere repentance and honest efforts to undo the wrong to innocent creatures of God. The King set free all the prisoners.

Babar

Similarly, the Guru was arrested by the victorious army men of Babar at Eminabad, and then called at Syedpur in 1521. Guru Nanak was given a load to carry and Mardana was required to act as a groom for the horse of one of the commanders named Mir Khan. Guru saw rape and rapine to his right and left, houses on fire, harvest burning, captive men, women and children weeping and shrieking. He bade Mardana to let horse itself and play the rebeck and poured his heart in a memorable song called Babarwani in Rag Assa.

"The beautiful women, who used to dwell in palaces, whose locks were dressed with perfume wax, and whose forehead

painted with sacred vermilion mark, have had their tresses clipped with the swords of Babar and dust has been thrown on their shaven heads and dishonored. Necks, which once had around them necklaces of pearls their wealth and beauty which gave them power and pleasure, have now become their baneful foes..... Had the Kings not lost all sense amid ignoble joys and pleasures, this misery would not have been the lot of this landNow the cohorts of Babar are rolling over the country. Even the prince cannot have his meals in peace. How hard it is with the captives. Their times of worship and prayer pass away unusedSuch is their lot ordained by God—to sit and weep & wail and moan. All happens as it pleases Him, O’Nanak! What is man to will against His will?

People around him were attracted and so Mir Khan and Babar too. Babar was impressed by the words of the Guru, and asked for his blessings. The Guru replied, ‘If thou desirest to establish an empire in India, be one of the people of India. Treat thy Hindu and Muslim subjects alike. Let thy rule be a rule of justice and kindness. Deal mercifully with the vanquished. Give up wine, gambling & other ignoble habits of body and mind, worship God in spirit and truth’. Babar could not refuse it.

Needless to say, Babar did value and follow this in his later life. History bears abundant testimony to this. ‘But for those, who have read of Babar’s power, influence and formidableness, the patriotic part played by the Guru does not stand in need of comments. He met the most terrible man on earth, a wink of whose brow was sufficient order for putting millions to the sword and, by his able intercession, turned him into a kindest ruler. This was the service that the Guru rendered to his country and countrymen’. (Ramanand to Ramtirath, quoted by Kartar Singh M.A. at page 230 of his work ‘Life of Guru Nanak Dev’)

Slave Enslaves the Master

Those were the dark days of India’s history. There were tracts and territories where the paramountacy of Emperor of Delhi could be flouted successfully. One such place was Rohilkhand where petty chiefs caught the strangers and wayfarers to enslave them. This was intolerable for the Guru. He felt pity for both the slaves and the masters and resolved to put an end to

the dirty business. He entered the dark country and was soon caught and sold as slave to an influential chief who entrusted him with the work of fetching water from a stream.

The Guru took up the pitcher to comply with the orders of his master. Lo! There was no water, the stream having turned dry. The Guru went from pond to pond, rivulet to rivulet, but there was no drop of water. The whole city was dying of thirst. At last a divine, told the chief that he had committed a grave sin in enslaving some very good soul. The chief realized his mistake and the Guru was recalled from his arduous job and set free. But he would not leave the place until all the slaves were released. The chief had to give way and slavery was abolished in Rohilkhand.

Kartarpur founded

How the cities and towns are founded as a result of repentance of a sinner is illustrated by the story of Karoria who was a Muslim landlord of a village on the banks of Ravi. Guru Nanak stayed there for some time and became popular with the people which Karoria resented. He decided to go and tell the Guru to move away from his land. He mounted his horse, but on the way horse stumbled and he fell down. Next time when he set out with the same purpose, he lost his sight; but got the inner sight and he repented. He sought the forgiveness of Guru and offered an area of land where Guru could found a village. The latter smiled and said, 'The land is of Kartar (God) and you are blessed for dedicating it to divine services. We shall call the village Kartarpur, The seat of Almighty.

In short, while the place grew in importance, dharmshalas and houses were built and the Guru's family moved to the village. It was from here that the Guru went twice on his long journeys. The Guru himself started a farm which he cultivated himself. He produced not only enough for himself and his family but gave the surplus to the free kitchen. (Guru Nanak by Sir Jogendra Singh and Raja Sir Daljit Singh, pp 38-39)

Qaroon and Caliph

According to S.M. Latif, author of History of Punjab, the Guru visited Istanbul and talked to Sultan of Turkey who was noted for his cupidity and his extreme oppression of his subjects. His admonition had an effect on the Sultan who is said to have discontinued his tyranny over his people.

We also have a '*Nasihah Nama*' composed by some Punjabi poet in the name of Guru Nanak, which is purported to have been addressed to Qaroon Patshah of Egypt, who had collected forty treasures of wealth, but lost his faith in Rassol.

Chali ganj jore na rakhio iman

Dekho re logo Qaroon hoya preshan

Guru Nanak gave him a needle and said 'Keep it with you. I will take it back in the next world.' 'How it is possible' replied the great miser. 'I will not be able to carry it there' 'Then what about the forty treasures for which you sinned so much that even dead bodies are stripped off the shrouds.' Will you be able to carry them with you? Asked the Guru. Qaroon was changed. Giani Gian Singh says that *Nasihah Nama* was meant for Caliph of Baghdad whose name was Bakr (and Ismail Safvi according to Gyani Udham Singh). He had imprisoned many Pirs and Fakirs as they failed to bless him with a son. Guru Nanak had the captives released and blessed him with a son. His queen out of gratitude presented him a Chola (cloak) which had holy hymns of the Koran written on it. Guru gave it to Makhdum Bahauddin as a gift.

Mardana

How a worthless piece of iron is turned into a piece of precious metal is evident from the case of Mardana. According to Principal Stabir Singh his real name was Dana. He was poor minstrel (Doom) of Talwandi, dependent upon alms of villagers, whom he served in various capacities. Guru Nanak raised him up so much so that his name has become immortal. His deep devotion earned him the love of his master who bestowed upon him a rebeck as a wedding gift when the Guru wed. The instrument was devised and designed by the Guru himself and manufactured by Bhai Phiranda. It remained with Mardana till he

quitted this world. He turned out to be a fearless musician. He would play on the rebeck as the Guru sang his spontaneous divine songs or he would sweetly sing those songs himself as the Master sat in mute adoration.

First Sikh Missionary

Sajjan was a notorious Muslim, Thug of Tulambah, situated near the present railway station of Makhdumpur in Multan District (Pakistan). Any body, who entered his habitation was poisoned to death and deprived of his belongings. Guru Nanak and Mardana visited him and confronted him with the picture of his sins committed by him and told him the definition of a Sajjan that is a friend.

**“Bronze is bright and shinning,
Rub it and it turns black.
And a hundred washings cano't remove it
They are Sajjans, they are true comrades
Whose friendship bears the mark of sincerity
Who are present in a friend's hours of need”**

Sajjan was overwhelmed and became conscious of his misdeeds. He repented. The Guru taught him the first stanza of Japji Sahib and how to feel the presence of God while awake and sleep. Then Sajjan spent numerous weary days in finding the kith and kin of his victims and retuning to them what he had robbed, the latter of. He was installed as a Sikh missionary who established the first Gurudawara.

Sheikh Brahm

Sheikh Brahm, whose real name which might be Ibrahim or Behram has been distorted by early Sikhs and Sikh writers like those of Syed Budhu Shah, Mir Mannu etc. He was also known as Farid the second of Pakpattan. He was a great Sufi Fakir. He met Guru and, according to Bhai Mani Singh, said to him, “You are said to be a bard of God, pray, sing me His ode, as the bards of kings sing theirs.” The Guru recited Asa-di-Var which depicts the process through which man is turned into a perfect human being, a Devta so to say through the grace of Guru:

**Balihari gur apne dehari sadvar
Jis manas te devte kie kart na lagi var.**

Strange Salutation

Sheikh Sharaf of Panipat had spent his days and nights in ceaseless efforts to realize Lord, but in vain. And he was beginning to loose heart. By then the Guru arrived at Panipat and took his seat near a well. One of the disciples of Sheikh named, Tatihari went there to fetch water. Seeing that the Guru was wearing a Persian cap and a strange motley dress, Tatihari took him for a Persian saint. He approached him and accosted him with "Assalamo-alaikam" Peace be with you. The Guru smilingly replied "Salam Alekh" - Salutation to the invisible Lord.

Tatihari was astonished to hear this pun (Fun) on the Muslim Salutation. He went back and told about it to his Pir, who went to see the Guru. He asked 'what are the characteristics of a Darvesh? The Guru said, 'He is a Darvesh-who, while living, is dead to the world, who is awake while the world sleeps; who permits him self to be plundered and having lost all meets the beloved' 'You are indeed such a person' exclaimed Shah Sharaf. He was satisfied and returned with a high hope to realize God.

Hamza Ghaus

Quite contrary to this, there were some Muslim saints who were engrossed in immorality or miracles. Others were busy in subjugating the simple and illiterate people through their curses and other wrathful activities.

Hamza Ghaus was one of them who was out to destroy the whole population of Sialkot because one of its inhabitants had gone back on his words and was not surrendering his first male issue which he had promised to dedicate to the Ghaus. He took the stern vow and shut himself in a cell to perform the penance with the destructive view.

When Guru Nanak heard of it, he tried to pacify him, but the Pir would not see reason. The Guru, therefore, had to counter act his action. On the appointed day when the whole city was trembling with the imaginary calamity, suddenly the dome of cell

occupied by the Pir cracked and the walls fell asunder. Hamza was frightened, disappointed and admitted his fault.

Panja Sahib

Similarly Vali Kandhari of Hassan Abdal would not allow Mardana to drink water from the stream passing by his hermitage. The Guru diverted the passage of the stream which enraged the Vali. He miraculously rolled a rock on the Guru who held it back with his hand, the impression of which was made on the rock and still remains under the name Panja Sahib (Pakistan). Vali's pride was humbled.

Nurshah or Zulmat Begum

In that medieval age there was a state of women in Kamrup (Assam) ruled over by a queen, Nurshah (or the king of light) was a charming lady in the real sense. But her evil deeds deserved her to be called Zulmat Begum (Queen of darkness). The women played black magic on any man who happened to go there per chance. Mardana, who was sent by his Master to buy some necessities of life from town, accordingly came under their influence and felt acting like a lamb. Guru Nanak came to his rescue and the charmer. With his uttering 'Sat kartar' the charmer's charm lost its effect. Mardana returned to his original self and Nurshah gave up her evil deeds.

Jiwan Kicks the Guru

Sant Namdev once ironically said that a Hindu, believing in more than one God was blind and Turku (Muslim) was one eyed as he thought the West only to be the abode of Allah. Guru Nanak wanted to tell the latter that God was omnipresent in all direction. One night, when he lay with his feet towards the Kaaba, Jiwan a Punjabi fanatic priest kicked him saying, 'who are you, O' Infidel that you sleep with your feet towards the God. 'Brother' came the reply, 'I am tired, and you may please turn my feet in the direction in which God is not.'

Jiwan dragged the Guru's feet in various directions, but every time to his dismay, Guru's feet remained towards Kaaba. He was perplexed, annoyed and confused. Guru said, "Jiwan!

Do not you see that God dwells in all directions?" The clouds of ignorance disappeared and Jiwan saw the light.

Later in response to a question by Pir Rukan Din, who was better of Hindu and Muslims, The Guru told the Haji that goodness depends on good deeds of an individual.

Baba akhe Hajian shub amlan bajhon downen roi

Strange Azan

At Baghdad, Nanak attracted the attention of Muslims and gave the Azan in his own way by omitting the Prophet's name. He then bade Mardana to play his rebeck and began to sing the praises of the lord. The centre of Islam echoed and re-echoed with the melodious tunes of divine music; music which is taboo with the Muslims.

The head priest ordered that the infidel be stoned to death. The people came up, with stones in their hands. In spite of their best efforts the stones remained stuck in their hands.

Hearing about all this, the Pir Dastgir came to see the Guru and asked how he performed the miracle. The Guru replied, I have worked no miracle. Mercy is of God and he acts through, who are instruments of; His will. This is why; He is called Rahim who saved his slave from being stoned to death. As for Azan, I wonder how you reconcile your uncompromising monotheism with your joining the name of your Prophet with that of Lord. The words of Azan are not the words of Koran, I think.

It was here at Baghdad that Pir Bahlol sat at Guru's feet 'for eight fortnights and in words of Swami Anandacharya, hearkened to Guru's words on life and the path and spring eternal, while the moon waxed and waned in the pomegranate grove beside the grassy desert of the dead.' The fakir, after the departure of the Guru would speak to none nor listen to the voices of angel or man. For sixty winters the soul of Bahlol rested on the Master's word like a bee poised on a dawn lit honey-rose'.

Poles Apart

The Divine Guide thus went from place to place to emancipate the souls entangled in the web of misunderstanding and misgivings. In the vicinity of Sialkot, he tore asunder the veil of so called spirituality of Sada Sohagan Fakir who flirted with

women, who came to worship him. It was the first and last time in his life that the Guru asked the public to resort to force and break open the door of the *hujra* of a so called Darvesh. The cheat was exposed and instructed to lead a holy life to become 'Sada Sohagan' of God in real sense.

On the other hand, near Pasrur Mian Mitha was sitting halfway on his long journey. The Guru clarified his doubts and solved his knotty problems about Kalma, Rassool and judgment day which bewildered the Fakir. To show him the hidden power of *Nam* the Guru said to him, 'Close your eyes' and uttered the word 'La', the whole creation disappeared and then uttered Allah and the creation came into existence again.

Pir Bahauddin

No account of Guru Nanak's relation with Muslims is complete without mentioning the name of Pir Bahauddin of Multan who sent a cup brimful of milk to the Guru meaning that there was no place for another Fakir like the latter in the town which was already full of beggars ; as the saying was

**Char chiz ast tofa-i- Multan
Gard Garma Gada-o-Goristan**

(Multan has four gifts to offer dust, heat, beggars and graveyards)

The Guru returned the cup after putting a flower of Jasmine on the overflowing cup. No answer to a symbolic answer could be more correct. Pir Bahauddin went to the Guru barefooted and asked him to prove the power of the word to reabsorb or recreate.

In the words of two Knights (Sir Joginder Singh and Raja Daljit Singh) referred earlier the Guru smiled and said, 'calm your self'. He put his hand on the head of the Pir and uttered divine word. In an instant the Pir was reduced to ashes and then again Guru the looked at the ashes and uttered the word. The Pir appeared sitting in his place saying 'La illah-il-Lillah'

**Sat gur mera mar jiwale
Sat gur mera sad pritpale**

It is said that often the Pir bowed in his Namaz in the direction of Kartarpur as he saw the light of God in that direction. When his end drew near he wrote to Guru to do something for him so that he might have no cause for anxiety in the path of death because the Guru would not be with him. The Guru cheered him up by sending him a message of hope and love saying, "Those who have lead a life of love, service and devotion do not die. I shall not long be away from you for my life's journey in the world is done. I shall follow you in six weeks."

The Guru left for his heavenly abode forty days after the death of Pir

In the dispute that arose after the Guru's death, between his followers regarding the disposal of his earthly remains, Muslims wanted to bury the body of the Guru. Next day when the sheet was removed the Guru's body was not to be found. They divided the sheet into two and Muslims buried it and erected a grave which along with the memorial built by the Hindus in the name of Guru was washed away by river Ravi. They proved that Guru Nanak belongs to all and not only to Hindus or Muslims.

Sabna da sanjha Baba

Sabna da yar wo.

Editor Adds: 1. Guru Nanak Sahib during his first Udasi, visited the present place of Nanak Jhira, where a Magnificent Gurudwara stands now. Here during his visit Guru Sahib blessed two Muslim Fakirs Sayyed Yakub & Jalal-u-din. Guru Sahib advised them to be true to their faith and explained its true meaning:

Namaj to be of equality, Roja of compassion, Haz is to sit in the presence of God, Jakat is to share your Morsel with less fortunate, Rather than Rasool seek the reccomendation/ blessings of Almighty.

2. Qazi Rukn-ud-din has written a lot about Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad and in one of his writings he pays following glowing tribute to Nanak's learning, fearlessness and character:

"Nanak Fakir attained proficiency in literature of Islam, and the commentary on Koran, the religious beliefs, Arabic and

Persian literatures, and was thoroughly advanced in them. He fought to finish oppression which was prevailing in the world. He was standard bearer of truth and eradicator of false. He would get the poor his rights and smash the vanity of proud. He was the best specimen of piety and of a traveler.

His morality was like a pure soul containing chosen and transparent gems, his soul was so transparent as if it was unconcerned having no connection what ever, with insipid and tasteless things of the world. The Baba's charming and animate talk still rings into my ears. He would cure the sick and serve the fakir and learned.

He used to compose poems* in Arabic and liked men of letters and poets. His thoughts provided basis to every literature and every poet, the glory of which is reflected in his poems. The rhyme itself was attracted towards his thoughts as if they were a magnet.

(The above has been reproduced from Dr. Tirlochan Singh 'Guru Nanak founder of Sikhism' by Dr D.S Chahal. With respect to above* the learned author says that the irony is that no such poems of Guru Nanak written in Arabic or Persian are available except a few reported by Dr Tirlochan Singh.)

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Footnotes

1. Rai Bular coming back from pleasure hunting saw, Guru Nanak sleeping under a tree. He was astonished to observe that tree under which the Guru was sleeping was providing the shade; where as the adjoining trees were shade less due to the position of the Sun. Rai Bular came home and called for Mehta Kalu and said these words; Janamsakhi says;
Kalu! Mat iss putar nu fit mar denda hoven, ih mahanpurkh hai; iss da sadka mera shehar wasda. Kalu tun bhi nihai hoia, ate main bhi nihai han, jis de shehar vich ih peda hoia hai; -Editor

Guru Arjan Dev's Role in History

Rome was not built in a day, so are the nations. Builders of a nation have to toil in the face of trials and tribulation. The lives of Sikh Guru's who built the edifice of the Khalsa were not the bed of roses. Guru Arjan's role in the history is unique. His frail body was baked in an oven, boiled in water, dragged in burning sand and in its mutilated and dead condition thrown in a river. This was the end of one who in the words of Dr. Gupta gave the Sikhs a common rallying point and a permanent spiritual centre of their religion. He encouraged his followers to take to the lucrative trade of horses in Afghanistan and Turkistan, thereby breaking their caste prejudices and making them rich and enterprising. As a consequence of these great measures his disciples venerated him so much that he came to be called *Sucha Patshah* or veritable King, quoted in "studies in Later Mughal History" thereby indicating that he exercised a just influence on the people and guided them to salvation.

Guru Arjan Dev (1563-1606) was brought up under the care and guidance of two great Guru's, Amar Dass Ji and Ram Dass Ji and his illustrious mother Bibi Bhani, and thus he was infused with divine spirit from his childhood itself. Verily the Bhatt Kalya (Kalashar) says,

ਗੁਰ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਘਰਿ ਕੀਅਉ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਾ॥

ਸਗਲ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਪੂਰੀ ਆਸਾ॥

ਤੈ ਜਨਮਤ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਛਾਣਿਓ॥

ਕਲ੍ਹ ਜੋਤਿ ਕਰ ਸੁਜਸੁ ਵਖਾਣਿਓ॥

"Since your birth you acquired the greatness of being in harmony with God." On the death of his father which took place on 1st Sep, 1581, he became Guru. This made his eldest brother¹ his mortal enemy. He sought the help of various Government

officials to oust his brother from *Guru-Ship*. Sulhi Khan, a revenue officer was induced to coerce the Guru. Sulhi Khan died an ignominious death by a fall into a lime kiln. There are four shabds in SGGS with reference to Sulhe Khan, a revenue officer in Mughal court; a henchman of Pirthichand. Sulhe Khan at the instance and instigation of Pirthichand was dead set to usurp the Guruship. He had boasted that he shall bestow Guruship on Pirthichand at any cost. Keeping this situation in view, Sikhs of Guru Arjan Dev ji proposed to send a letter or send two men to speak to him or take an effective step to settle the issue. But Guru Sahib said that he has left everything to the will of God and he repeatedly recites his name only.

ਪ੍ਰਥਮੇ ਮਤਾ ਜਿ ਪਤੀ ਚਲਾਵਉ ॥
 ਦੁਤੀਏ ਮਤਾ ਦੁਈ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਪਹੁਚਾਵਉ ॥
 ਤ੍ਰਿਤੀਏ ਮਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਰਉ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥
 ਮੈ ਸੁਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਛੋਡ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤੁਹੀ ਧਿਆਇਆ ॥ ਸਫਾ 37 ।

Referring to his boastful behaviour, (with reference to attitude of local court officials) Guru Sahib says that the person who un-necessary Lords over the poor & unprotected people is likely to be doomed and God punishes those & his beard shall be destroyed in fire.

ਗਰੀਬਾ ਉਪਰਿ ਜਿ ਖਿਜੈ ਦਾੜੀ
 ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਸਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਸਾੜੀ ॥ ਸਫਾ 199

Next referring to this incident Guru Sahib says in Rag Todi, that Usurper was reduced to ashes instantly and recieved the award for his misdeeds and this is internal revelation i.e. profound knowledge and whole world is witness to this.

ਭਸਮਾ ਭੂਤ ਹੋਆ ਬਿਨ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਕੀਆ ਪਾਇਆ
 ਆਗਮ ਨਿਰਮ ਕਹੈ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਭ ਦੇਖੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਭਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਫਾ, 714

Sulhi Khan fell from horse into the burning Brick kiln and died an ignomious death. Guru Sahib says in Rag Bilawal that God, the Almighty saved me from Sulhe Khan and he did not succeed in his plot and died in disgrace.

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਰਾਖ॥

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਕਾ ਹਾਥ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਪਹੁਚੈ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਹੋਆ ਮੁਆ ਨਾਪਾਕ॥ ਸਫਾ, 325

In Rag Bhairo, Guru Sahib says that slanderer was destroyed in fire and God always protects and embraces his disciple.

ਅਪਣੇ ਦਾਸ ਕਉ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਗਾਵੈ ॥

ਨਿੰਦਕ ਕਉ ਅਗਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ ਪਾਪੀ ਤੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ॥੧॥

ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਪਾਪੀ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਕਤਹੁ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਚਿਆ ਆਪ

ਕਮਾਇਣ ॥੧॥

In 1594 Pirthi Chand represented to Akbar that he was the real heir to the *Gaddi* and that Guru Arjan, who, he said, had often flouted the Government orders, was an usurper. Akbar saw through the game and rejected the representation (*Mehzar Nama* – is a common representation signed by number of people, made to Government or the authority of the day for redressal of the grievances.) outright. The Guru recorded thus: in Rag Gauri,

ਮਹਜਰੁ ਭੂਠਾ ਕੀਤੇਨ ਆਪਿ॥

ਪਾਪੀ ਕਉ ਲਾਗਾ ਸੰਤਾਪ॥

He himself rejected the representation, the sinner was discomfited.

A humanist requires manifold qualities of head and heart for the accomplishment of his mission, so was in the case of Guru. It was reserved for him to organize the Sikhs on a high level and make satisfactory arrangements for the safe custody and proper use of money coming from Sikhs for the welfare of the people in general. Twenty- two dioceses established by Guru Amar Dass were found insufficient to cope with the work of organizing ever increasing and expanding circle of Sikhs in various parts of continent. Keeping this in view he appointed *Masands* (A body of Sikh devotees who were employed as collectors of religious offerings for the Guru). In the words of Mohsin Fani “through that Masand, people became Sikhs of the Guru. The Chief Masand through whom great multitudes became Sikhs of the Guru, appointed his own deputies, until in every place and

district the associates of a Masand, through his deputy became Sikhs of the Guru". These Masands were entrusted with the collection of *tithe* or one tenth of the income of Sikhs set apart for the Guru's fund.

Apart from this, the grievances of general public received his attention. On his way to chastise the rebellious Yusufzai Pathans, Raja Birbal halted at Amritsar and imposed on local Khattris; tax to meet the expenditure of army. The aggrieved Khattris sought the help of the Guru who asserted that the tax was illegal and boldly told the Raja that Khattris would not pay the same.

When the Emperor visited the Guru at Goindwal towards the end of 1598, the latter brought to his notice the hardships of the farmers and sought remission of a part of the revenue to which the former acceded.

Saviour of Souls

Along with the redressing the worldly hurdles which stood in the way of human life, he carried the propagation of Guru Nanak's mission of Fatherhood and Brotherhood of man, for the emancipation of souls who were neither Hindus nor Muslims, bereft of un-necessary rituals, devoid of division of caste, creed, tribe and racism. For him it was the Sikh way of life, said Vth Nanak in Rag Bhairi:

ਵਰਤ ਨ ਰਹਉ ਨ ਮਹ ਰਮਦਾਨਾ ॥
 ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਵੀ ਜੋ ਰਖੈ ਨਿਦਾਨਾ ॥ ੧ ॥
 ਏਕ ਗੁਸਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥
 ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਨਬੇਰਾ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
 ਹਜ ਕਾਬੈ ਜਾਉ ਨ ਤੀਰਥ ਪੂਜਾ ॥
 ਏਕੋ ਸੇਵੀ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੂਜਾ ॥ ੨ ॥
 ਪੂਜਾ ਕਰਉ ਨ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਉ ॥
 ਏਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਲੇ ਰਿਦੈ ਨਮਸਕਾਰਉ ॥ ੩ ॥
 ਨਾ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥
 ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿਛੰ ਪੁਰਾਨ ॥ ੪ ॥ ਸਫ਼ਾ - 1136

I do not keep the Hindu fast, nor the Muslim Ramdan,
 I serve him alone, who is my refuge,

I serve one Master who is also Allah, the Almighty
 I have broken with Hindu and the Muslim.
 I will not worship with the Hindus, nor like Muslims go
 to Mecca.
 I will serve him and none else
 I will not pray to Idols nor say the Namaz
 I shall lay my heart at the feet of one Supreme Being.
 For we are neither Hindus nor Musalmans.

Greatest Gift of Truth

Bhai Gurdas says, "Guru Arjan is a worthy child of his forefathers. He sits in full spiritual glory on the sovereign seat of Guruship established by Guru Nanak. He gives spiritual sustenance to countless souls. The unstruck stream of divine melody flows unabated. There is an exchange of jewels and gems of wisdom in his divine court. From the North and South and from East to West, seekers of truth flock to Guru Arjan and accept discipleship of his faith. So wonderful is the Sikh organization of the perfect one that there is free kitchen giving bodily food to all who come and there is also the more important free kitchen distributing spiritual food to all who seek it. His divine court is an insignia of truth and greatness. Under the divine protection of the Lord the Gurmukhs attain the word 'brahm', which is contained in Veds and Katebas. The Guru has created numerous Bhagats like Janak who are detached from the Maya. Guru Arjan is the greatest gift of living truth from God to suffering and ignorant humanity. The Gurmukh receive the pleasure of lord without effort"

Verily poet Mathura thought himself blessed to see the light of the perfect Guru shining in Arjan Dev with his own eyes:

ਭਨਿ ਮਥੁਰਾ,
 ਮੁਰਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਥਿਰੁ ਲਾਇ ਚਿਤੁ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਰਹਹੁ ॥ ੧ ॥
 ਕਲਿ-ਜੁਗਿ ਜਹਾਜੁ, ਅਰਜੁਨੁ ਗੁਰੂ,
 ਸਗਲ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ੍ਟਿ ਲਗਿ ਬਿਤਰਹੁ ॥ ੨ ॥

“In this dark age, he says, Guru Arjan is a ship to save humanity from the tumultuous and stormy water of this dark ocean; our world. We should contemplate the eternal light shining in him.

ਅਜੈ ਗੰਗ ਜਲੁ ਅਟਲੁ, ਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਭ ਨਾਵੈ।

ਨਿਤ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਬਾਚੀਅਹਿ, ਬੇਦ ਬਹੁਮਾ ਮੁਖਿ ਗਾਵੈ॥

In the above shalok, similarly poet Harbans eulogizes the qualities of head and heart of the great Guru by saying that he is an eternally flowing holy Ganga in which the disciples come to bathe their minds and souls to purify themselves and gain enlightenment. Day in day out one can hear the holy word being uttered and sung by Guru Arjan. Here is a visible Brahma and no imaginary deity giving expression to new life giving scriptures.

Great Musician and Inventer

To quote again Bhai Gurdas the soul of Guru Arjan vibrates music celestial. He was a great musician, composer and exponent of music, both classical and modern. So effective was appeal of his music that adamant Baba Mohan had to bow before Musician Guru. In compiling the Adi Granth he arranged the writings of Guru's and Bhagat's in order of *Ragas* which were thirty in number. In doing so he gave the metres a new shape and blend according to needs and necessities of time. Thus he took out of the Muslim and Hindu Ragas, what was vital and good and blended them together, so as to produce new tunes vibrating with love, hope and courage. He invented a new instrument called *Saranda*. It was easy to play on. The Guru encouraged and led the Sikhs to learn music and become self sufficient in view of art having been monopolized by the bards and minstrels who being mercenary often let down the Sikhs. Episode of Satta and Balwand was an eye opener to them.

Coloniser

Guru was a great builder² of a great nation, its ideals and institution. On one hand, he satisfied the body and spiritual hunger of the people by running free kitchen and holding religious congregations and on the other he tried to heal their diseases both physical and mental. He had in mind two fold

objects when he founded **Taran Tarn**. It became a place of pilgrimage and asylum for lepers. In addition to this, he wished the new town flourish as a trade centre also like Amritsar, so that his countrymen may prosper materially also. In 1594, he founded Kartarpur in Jalandhar Doab. He built the town of Sri Hargobindpur to celebrate the birth of his son. These new towns became the centre of trade and helped the prosperity of surrounding areas. In the midst of Amritsar (pool of nectar) he built the Harimandir (Temple of God). Any one without distinction of cast or creed could bathe in the tank of immortality and could worship in the tank temple, the foundation stone of which was got laid by a Mohammedan Saint Mian Mir, an act which was both sensational and revolutionary in those days of caste prejudices.

Money and Guru Arjan

Guru Arjan was not averse to right use of money earned through sweat of brow. Moreover it was required for the common good of the people coming under the influence of the Sikhism and for running charitable institutions like Langar etc. According to Panth Parkash Maya, the power and pelf of the world kept, as it were, at a distance of twelve miles from Guru Nanak and six miles from Guru Angad. It knocked at the door of Guru Amar Das and fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, while in Guru Arjan's time it got admission in to the house. No doubt, the wealth came to him, but he made its best use and advised his Sikhs to follow suit repeating what Guru Amar Das had told Gango, a Khatri of Bassi tribe, the latter had asked the Guru, "Lord! What shall I do to save myself?" "Open a bank at Delhi," Said the Guru.

Compilation of Adi Granth

In the midst of Amritsar (pool of nectar), he built the Harimandir (Temple of God). In the temple was installed the Adi Granth –The Bible of the Sikhs, compiled and edited by Guru Arjan Dev. This is the only religious book of the world which was written under the direct supervision of the prophet of that religion. It has remained unchanged since its original compilation more than 350 (now 408 years) years ago. According to late

Principal Teja Singh, when taking down the Bhagat's composition from Sahansar Ram's manuscript, Guru Arjan used his editorial scissors pretty frequently. He omitted many hymns given in the original. He also changed the **Ragas**. The Guru also made verbal changes here and there. Many difficult words were replaced by easier one's, as in the case of Namdev's hymns³. (Spokesman, Annual Number-1952). It is a marvelous instance of consistency which was not observed any where not even in the European language of the time.

In the real sense of the word the Granth is a synthesis of scriptures. Besides the teachings of the Gurus, sayings of about fifteen gracious Saints, both Hindus and Muslims hailing from every nook and corner of the India, including two bards have also been preserved. Bhattas or Kavis also got representation. It is an excellent record of the religious and political thought of India from 12th to 17th century. This spiritual dictionary also provides a field for linguistic research work.

The Granth is in a linguistic point of view, says Dr. Trumpp, is of greatest interest to us, as it is a real treasury of old Hindi dialects, specimens of which have been preserved there in, which are not to be found any where else. The Granth contains sufficient materials which will enable us to investigate those old and now obsolete dialects, from which the modern idioms have had their origin so that the gap which hitherto existed between the older Prakrit dialects and the modern languages of the Arian stock, may by a careful comparative study of the same be fairly filled up.

Marvellous Poet

It contains 5894 hymns and the total number of stanzas has been given by Pincott as 15575 out of which 2218 were written by Guru Arjan Dev, whose contribution is the largest in respect of the contents of the Granth, which is three times the size of Rig Veda. Bawa Budh Singh gives some details as under. (*Hans Chog*, p 110)

Nature of Composition	Total Number	Those of Guru Arjan
Shabads	2106	1416
Ashtapadis	319	82
Chhand	207	72
Sohilas	92	24
Pauris	465	107
Slokas	1734	239

Dr. Mohan Singh estimates that the composition of the Guru runs into 60,000 lines. The most celebrated writings of the Guru are Sukhmani in Gauri Rag and Bara Mahan in Majh Rag meant for social betterment and spiritual uplift of humanity. To a man complaining of life weariness there is nothing as invigorating as Guru Arjan's Sukhmani which is great consoler of the mind, says Teja Singh.

Organisation of the Sikhs

The Central temple at Amritsar and the holy book gave the Sikhism the shape of a regular church. Guru Arjan extended the *Manji* and *Peera* system established by his predecessor for the propagation of the faith and deputed sincere and zealous Sikhs in all important towns and cities. A senior Masand (In Persian, Masand meaning cushioned seat) during his visit to Sikh congregation was offered a cot (*Manji*) and a junior a stool (*Peerah*) to sit on, while audience squatted on mats or carpets. These missionaries were called *masands* who collected daswandh/tithe of their income from the Sikhs and preached Sikhism. According to Mohsin Fani, fairly large number of people both Hindus and Muslims became Sikhs so much so that in every town and village there was a *masand* or his agent to propagate the faith of Nanak. This was the great movement which in the eyes of the Emperor was a business of falsehood requiring an iron hand to suppress the same.

Jagat guru

Guru Arjan did not confine his activities to the welfare or uplift of the Sikhs alone. He was the leader and protector of humanity at large. He suffered with those whom he saw

suffering. He dauntlessly refused to pay the tax unjustly imposed by Raja Birbal on the Khattris of Amritsar. In the time of famine he moved Akbar to remit the land revenue of Punjab for that year. He would intermediate between two clashing tribes and pacify them.

Guru Nanak Says in *Rag Vadhans*, 'Death is the privilege of Brave men, provided they died for an approved cause.' So Guru Arjan died without complaining, singing in the midst of flames. 'The spell of superstition has burst, the mind is illumined. The master has cut the fetters off the feet and freed the captive. His cause was righteous and brave, and he suffered for it. No martyr's lot was harder than Guru Arjan's and yet no body has sung life more cheerfully than he: 'whatever thou givest, I treat as happiness. Where thou placest me there shall be my heavens.

ਰਾਗ ਮਾਝ ਮਹਲਾ 5 ॥

ਤੂੰ ਸਾਝਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਬਾਪੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥

ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਅਖੁਟ ਭੰਡਾਰਾ ॥

ਜਿਸ ਤੂੰ ਦੇਹਿ ਸੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਿ ਅਘਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਭਗਤੁ ਤੁਮਾਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥2 ॥

ਸਭ ਕੋ ਆਸੈ ਤੇਰੀ ਬੈਠਾ ॥

ਘਟ ਘਟ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਵੂਠਾ ॥

ਸਭੇ ਸਾਂਝੀਵਾਲ ਸਦਾਇਨਿ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਦਿਸਿਹਿ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥3 ॥

ਤੂੰ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਰਾਇਹਿ ॥

ਤੂੰ ਆਪੇ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਜਨਮਿ ਭਵਾਇਹਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਤੇਰੈ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੇ ਸਭ ਤੇਰਾ ਖੇਲ ਦਸਾਹਰਾ ਜੀਉ ॥4 ॥97 ॥

O' my Lord, You are the universal giver

Your treasure of nine elements (Nau Nidh-Riches/wealth) is inexhaustible.

Those devotees who stand blessed with your gracious bounties are satiated and fulfilled.

All commit their HOPES on you.

You are present everywhere (Omnipresent), pervade in each and every heart.

Each and every creature is related to you and none is separated from you.

You liberate the GURU-Oriented and SELF-Oriented are put into a vicissitude of transmigration.

Nanak, Your disciple is intensely devoted to you as all your creation is conclusive and demonstrative.

Guru Arjan Dev's bani sings the praises of; Almighty, love, compassion, reverence, meditation, greatness of God; all for the betterment of mankind.

His martyrdom

It was the fateful year 1604 AD; that the compilation of Adi Granth was completed. The sacred book was installed in Harimandir Sahib, Baba Buddha being appointed the first Granthi. In the same year the Guru refused to accept the betrothal of Chandu's daughter to his son. Pirthi Chand found a good ally in Chandu. Change of masters of throne of Delhi towards the end of 1604 brought about a political upheaval in Punjab. Under the order of Jahangir the inns began to be built by Nurdin and Amanat Khan. The Guru was then engaged in the construction of tank and a temple at Taran Tarn. Both the Government officials forcibly took possession for their own use, of bricks meant for Taran Tarn temple. The Guru suspended the construction and repaired to Amritsar.

In the mean time the Emperor had reached Lahore and punished the rebel prince Khusrau and his comrades. Chandu Shah at the instigation of Prithi Chand poisoned the ears of Jahangir who was already prejudiced against the Guru. He issued orders for his arrest and confiscation of his property, his residential buildings and his children made over to Murtza Khan, and sentenced him to 'Yasa and Siyasat', capital punishment carried out in a way that the blood of the convict is not split.

According to father Fernao Guerreiro, Guru Arjan was released in consideration of hundred thousands of *crusados* for which a wealthy Hindu became surety. This man in order to realize the fine subjected the Guru to 'every kind of ill usage', which brought on death (Vide FN-2, page 35, a Short history of Sikhs Teja Singh and Ganda Singh). Presumably this wealthy man was Chandu who in any way managed to get hold of the Guru and subjected him to all possible sorts of tortures. He was

put in boiling cauldron and seated on a red hot iron plate, burning sand being showered upon him simultaneously. To quote Kesar Singh Chhibar, ultimately his blistered body was thrown in the burning sand on the banks of Ravi and he was stoned to death. His body was then thrown into the river which carried it away to its final rest.

This occurred on May 30th, 1606 AD, and his martyrdom is a turning point in the history and it produced far reaching results. His execution apart from all other considerations was a political blunder. The Sikhs were virile and martial group organized on principles conducive to harmony instead of discord. Like the Rajputs they could be an invaluable source of strength, if they were not antagonized, as the British discovered later. (*Making of Modern India*; p100)

Prof. Puran Singh says 'Arjan Dev was cruelly tortured to death, to the sore affliction of the soul of the whole people; the devotion they bore to their Master was deep and selfless. While they helplessly witnessed his cruel death a curse arose from among them, both against the Mughal Empire and against themselves. Now that He had been tortured of what use was life? Their prospect was annihilation: acceptance of which meant the eventual disappearance from this earth of the type of spiritual humanity created by the master; resistance to which meant sorrow, suffering hunger, death for themselves and their children – but so great was the love of the people for their true king, that all those ills must be endured.For the first time in the centuries long enslavement of the Indians by the hordes of barbarous invaders from the west, there was resistance. Guru Hargobind driven by curse and prayer of the people unsheathed his shining sword and declared holy war against the unrighteous Empire of India. The fire that had come leaping from outside into the camp of peace must be quenched (*The book of Ten masters* p-83)

Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan who braved all the tortures of Chandu nonviolently underwent a physical change. It is said that the last message Guru Arjan sent to his son was, "let him sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability". He reappeared as sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind and

girding up two swords, became incarnation of a great fighter against tyranny and injustice.

Editor's note: I am inclined to reproduce the translation by H. Beveridge of '**Jahangir's Memoirs**' (**Tuzuk-i-Jahangir**). Para attributed to Guru Arjan Dev Ji vide page 72 and 73, is as under.

In Gobindwal, which is on the river Biyah (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjun⁴ in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simple-hearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him Guru, and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations (of spiritual successors) they had kept this shop warm. Many times it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam.

At last when Khusrau passed along this road this insignificant fellow proposed to wait upon him. Khusrau happened to halt at the place where he was, and he came out and did homage to him. He behaved to Khusrau in certain special ways, and made on his forehead a finger mark in saffron, which the Indians (Hinduwan) call qashqua⁵ and is considered propitious. When this came to my ears and I clearly understood his folly, I ordered to produce him and handed over his houses, dwelling places, and children to Murtaza Khan, and having confiscated his property commanded that he should be put to death.

The character of Jahangir as given by the writer of '**Oxford student's history of India**' is more authentic:

"Jahangir has been described as a talented drunkard. In his youth he had been spoiled, and he grew up to be a willful, cruel man, easy-going and good natured when not thwarted, but a ferocious savage when angered. Like Muhammad-Bin-Tughlak, he was a mixture of opposites. We know all about him, because we have his own account of nineteen years of his reign recorded in his authentic memoirs, in addition to many narratives by Indian and European writers, not to speak of numerous life-like portraits, the work of skilled artists. We can thus see the man as he was—the typical Asiatic despot, a strange compound of

tenderness and cruelty, justice and caprice, refinement and brutality, good sense and childishness. Jahangir prided himself especially on his love of justice. When recording the execution of a notable personage for the crime of murder, he observes: God forbid that in such affairs I should consider princes, and far less that I should consider Amirs. But his justice was bloody and cruel, rarely tempered with mercy. For instance, he had no hesitation in sentencing hundreds of men at a time to be impaled on sharp stakes. He could feel the most acute grief for the loss of a wife or child, and yet hamstring and kill certain wretched beaters who had accidentally spoiled his shot at an antelope.”

Jahangir ascended the throne of India on 24th Oct, 1604, after six months, Prince Khusro, revolted and fled towards Punjab. Emperor Jahangir, a drunkard, blood thirsty monarch acting upon his own doctrine: King ship regards neither son nor son-in-law: no one is a relation to the King. In the words of H. Beveridge, ‘....pursued the rebel with untiring diligence and crushed the revolt in three weeks. He was an unjust king who acted as per his own unjust, ferocious and barbaric conscience and vehemently crushed the revolt and gave very cruel, disgusting and contemptuous punishments, to the accomplices of the rebel prince.

Prince Salim's advent to the throne of India was largely due to orthodox Muslim missionaries (zealots) who prevailed upon the dying Akbar to declare him the future Emperor. He was affectionately called *Gazi*. As such the Guru Arjan's martyrdom was entirely religious, compounded by the sequence of events namely the visit of Prince Khusro, opposition by Naqshbandi order of Muslim faith, enmity of Chandu, malice of his elder brother Pirthichand and the eccentricity of Jahangir. It is a recorded fact in History that following of Sikhism flourished since first Nanak. Fifth Guru established cities & Sikhism flourished in cities as well. The Sikhism being unique & different from other religions attracted many followers to its fold in great multitude. This was not digested by other contemporary religious heads like Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi who instigated the Emperor to put a stop to this expansion.

Footnote

1. Kesar Singh Chhibar, in Bansawali Namah says: Baba Srichand sent two turbans (on the demise of Guru Ram Dass ji, one for Pirthia and other for Arjan (Guru). Being head of family, Pirthia turbaned one and Arjan Guru turbaned the other one of Guruship.-Editor
2. Indu Bushan Banerjee refers to three fold task of Guru Arjan Dev: Completion of work on the 'tank of nector' (Amritsar), Construction of temple of God (Harimandir), and development of town of Ramdasapur(Quoted by JSGrewal: Guru Arjan's Dev's life, Martyrdom and legacy)- Editor
3. But Prof Sahib Singh is of the opinion that compositions of the Saints included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib were original and real ones of the Saints. If any change in the original composition were made that could have been in the lands of respective Saints or Bhagats. (About Compilations of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, page 90) But Macaulliffe differs; he opines that these hymns recieved some alterations in the process of transmission from Saints to their followers who were contemopararies of Guru Arjan.
4. The fifth Guru of the Sikhs and the compiler of the Granth. He was the father of Hargovind (Guru). See Sayyid Muhammad Latif's history of the Panjab, p. 253. (Guru) Arjun's tomb is in Lahore.
5. But qashqa is a Turkish word. The Hindi phrase seems to be tilak.

This is the compilation of two essays, **Guru Arjan and Guru Arjan's role in history**, appeared in **The "SPOKESMAN" Weekly** - 8th June, 1959 and 19 May, 1960.

Turning Point in Sikh History

Guru Arjan Dev's martyrdom is termed as a turning point in our history and actually it is so as the shape of events following it took a definite change, though it was not an overnight change altogether. The blow was too hard for the infant Sikh movement as it was struck for destroying its root and branch.

The ruler's contemporary to the Gurus, except Akbar to some extent, had been helpful to the Gurus and their ideals. Both Lodhis and Mughal Emperors imprisoned Guru Nanak. Humayun had unsheathed his sword against Guru Angad. Akabar summoned Guru Amar Das to his court to explain his motives and activities which were taken unreasonably to have offended Hindu and Muslim priests. Again, he entertained some doubts about what had been incorporated by Guru Arjan Dev in Guru Granth Sahib. But with coming to throne of Jahangir the relations between the Guru and the Emperor came to a breaking point. Since the ascension of Guru Nanak, period of Guruship is a glorious record of struggles & strifes for life. Despite all this the Sikhism flourished in the teeth of opposition. Malcolm says that Sikh nation through their early history have always appeared like a suppressed flame to rise higher splendour from every attempt to crush them. It has to face jealousy partly of pretenders to Guruship & traitors. Nevertheless there is no dreath of examples illustrating the sanctity attached to the principles of Sikhism.

No doubt the ideas and ideals of the Gurus were revolutionary and clashed with the interest of rulers yet the priests would not tolerate the awakening of the masses. People had found a savior in the Guru who had infused a new spirit in them to throw away the yoke of slavery, both mental and physical. Religious practices, Sati and Yagopawit etc which with passage of time had become a farce and source of income of the priests, had eaten into the vitals of society.

The people, in the words of Guru Nanak (**Andhi rayyiat gian vihuni bhai bhre murdar**) had become deaf-and-dumb camp followers of the priest and the King, totally ignorant of their rights and duties. The Gurus gave them a message of hope and encouraged them to bravely face the enemies with in and without the society, showing them the way to do so.

Guru Nanak faced the priest presiding over the sacred thread ceremony and bodily questioned the significance of the ceremony. He asked the invader Babar to realize the pangs and privation of the vanquished. Guru Angad remained unnerved when Humayun unsheathed his sword for nothing. (*Humayyun unsheathed his sword over the Guru, when he came to see him at Khadur Sahib to seek blessings for the throne of India, and the Guru remained oblivious of his presence; being engrossed in sports activities carried out at Khadur sahib. He preached him to face the enemy with strength and vigour.*) He popularized the institution of free kitchen (Langar) and gave the people a unifying force in the form of Punjabi script known as Gurmukhi. The very name of the script, therefore reminded that those, who employed it; of their duty towards the Guru. It also, constantly kept alive in their minds the consciousness that they were something distinct from the mass of Hinduism, that they were regenerated, liberated and saved. It also dealt a powerful blow to the domination of priestly class. The third effect of the introduction of this new alphabet was to increase the number of literate.

Guru Amar Das founded the second Sikh colony at Goindwal and provided the Sikhs with a rallying centre by constructing there a Baoli. He condemned Purdah system and practice of Sati. He established 22 dioceses (Manjis) to organize the ever increasing cadre of Sikhs. Guru Ram Dass gave them their Mecca, the present Amritsar, a commercial and industrial centre which, during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, yielded nine lakh of rupees for custom alone.

Guru Arjan Dev, a born poet, a practical philosopher, a powerful organizer and a great statesman, gave the people their Bible (Adi Granth), Their temple (Harmandir Sahib), new colonies viz, Kartarpur(Jalandhar), Sri Hargobindpur

(Gurdaspur) and Tarn Tarn (Amritsar) with a lepers asylum, a Baoli¹ in Dabbi Bazar- Lahore. He encouraged the homeless and uprooted people of Bilga village (Bardoli of Punjab situated in Jalandhar district) then vitiated by fire off and on, to settle there by blessing them with the courage and perseverance to face the calamities. He got intensified the activities of Masands who were chiefly employed in organizational work and for baptizing the new converts coming from both Hindu and Muslim fold. They also collected offering of the Sikhs (Daswandh or 1/10 of their income)

That the Guru was himself a fine horseman and polo player is corroborated by the fact that he pulled out with one stroke a deep rooted tree, shaped to look like a pole dug in the ground as a part of his marriage ceremony at Mau near Phillaur in Jullundur district. He encouraged his Sikhs also to take to trade in horses.

This step, in the words of G.C. Narang, though apparently most ordinary, was productive of manifold good to the rising power of Sikh theocracy.

First, it dealt another blow at the stringency of caste and Hindu superstition in breaking down the barrier which prevented the Hindus from crossing the Indus. It also tested and strengthened the faith of Sikhs, for it required a staunch belief and strong character to come out unscathed through a fanatical aggressive population like the Mohammedans of trans-Indus territories.

Secondly horse trade, being a lucrative trade in those days, enriched the Sikhs traders and brought large contribution to the coffers of the church.

A tradition connected with magnificence of Guru Arjan's darbar is related by Giani Gyan Singh. He says: "The power and pelf of the world kept, as it was, at a distance of twelve miles from Guru Nanak and six miles from Guru Angad. It knocked at the door of Guru Amar Das and fell at the feet of Guru Ram Das, while in Guru Arjan's time it got admission into the house."

The fable very beautifully describes the gradual growth of social, political and economic power of the Sikhs and glory of the court of the Guru whom the Sikhs regarded as "Sacha Patshah."

Thirdly, it laid the foundation of the future armies of the Khalsa by developing a taste for riding among the Sikhs who gradually became the finest horsemen in Northern India. Up to the time of Ranjit Singh, the Sikh forces were entirely composed of cavalry.

Thus as a matter of fact, the Sikhs had made a great advance under the pontification of Guru Arjan. Their power and prestige had increased and they were fast becoming a factor in the political life of province. According to Duncan Greenlees, Guru Arjan was one of the most lovable of all the ten. With sweetness he achieved in nation building what the great warrior: Umar attained for Islam. Under his stimulating leadership, the Sikhs had acquired an intensity of character which steeled them against all tyranny and corruption.

After describing the work of organization he had effected amongst his Sikhs, he says: "Now the order of merciful has gone forth that no one shall molest another." And the Sikhs had been sufficiently prepared to understand what that order meant for them.

Birbal, a Minister of Akbar, imposed a capitation tax on the Khatri of Amritsar who led by Guru Arjan Dev refused to pay it. Birbal threatened to bring an army to Amritsar (the threat being actually put into practice by Sulhi Khan and Sulbhi Khan at the instigation of Pirthi Chand) to punish the Guru; but he was called away to frontier where he was killed and nothing came of it. Thus the war was averted, but it is clear from the incident that the clash which came in the time of Guru Hargobind was due much earlier. Only an accident postponed it.

As the saying goes, "The truth is ever on scaffold, wrong ever on the throne" It was but natural that the Sikh movement progressing under Guru Arjan, the torch bearer of the truth, attracted the attention of the government of Jahangir who

ascended the throne with the help of Iranian nobles, Mullahs and Maulanas with a promise to promote the spread of Islam. The Emperor so famous for his justice could easily see a man being flayed in his presence. He accused the Guru on false pretext of helping his rebel son Khusrau, and of fascinating the simple minded Hindus and many foolish Muslims by his ways and teaching in the form of a shop of false business, which the Emperor intended since long to suppress and sentenced him to capital punishment (tortures of yasa and siyast) in case he refused to come to the fold of Islam.

The prejudice and malice of Jahangir against the Guru is evident from the fact that Sheikh Nazam of Thanesar, who had actually prayed for Khusrau's success, was sent to Mecca at state expenses. Similarly, Aurangzeb, according to Cunningham, ordered Guru Teg Bahadur to be put to death and his supposed accomplice Hafiz Adam, a follower of Sheikh Ahmed Sarhindi, was simply banished

The death of Guru Arjan convinced the Sikhs that they must arm themselves and fight if they wanted to live. "Guru Arjan founded, the Sikhs free of caste prejudice and devoted to the Guru; but a mere religious sect, he left them a nation and entrusted them to a successor with orders to maintain an army but in all other respects to follow the earlier Gurus", say Dr Teja Singh Ganda Singh. He was a great statesman, a peaceful organizer, philosopher and poet. His unfailing gentleness and loving self restraint before his spiteful older brother would alone have shown him a true saint",

His poems, a spontaneous inspired out flow, are so musical it is hard even for a foreigner to read them, they so demand to be sung. He is unusually easy in his diction and never obscure: there is much repetition, but every line seems new and fresh, it is so instinct with the simplicity of creation. His themes are ever love and devotion and union with her beloved and long agony of separation; his twelve months(Baramah) and his Sukhmani ranks among the best of these and perhaps recalls the misery of his three lonely years in Lahore before his father called him home.

His poems are the most extensive amongst the poets whose work is enshrined in the Guru Granth Sahib.

To hear them from his own lips that thrilled with yearning passion, playing on the melody of the Tambur's soft notes as he sang to the pilgrims in Harimandir at Amritsar must have been an experience to drive the bearer into all sanctifying love. His very presence was a vast spiritual attraction and none could be unmoved by it save the few who were inspired by Evil's very self, as it were. His tolerance of personal wrongs, his humility and patience would have won him love among the people of any nation on the earth. (The gospel of Guru Granth Sahib, Pages xviii-ix)

The martyrdom of such a noble soul brought out in an ignoble way and with horrifying means, with the connivance of his deadly enemies like Pirthia's successors and Chandu Shah, was bound to have its repercussions on the later events, resulting from the disgust of the helpless people and prove a turning point in history. Prof Puran Singh writes: "Arjan Dev was cruelly tortured to death to the sore affliction of the people. The devotion they bore to their master was deep & selfless. While they helplessly witnessed the cruel death, a curse arose from among them both against the Mughal Empire and against themselves. Now that he has been tortured, of what use was life? Their prospect was annihilation: acceptance of which meant the eventual disappearance from this earth of the type of spiritual humanity created by the Master; resistance to which meant sorrow, suffering, hunger and death for themselves and their children but, so great was the love of the people for their true King that all these ills must be endured For the first time in the centuries-long enslavement of the Indians by the hordes of barbarous invaders from the west, there was resistance. Guru Hargobind, driven by curse and prayer of the people, unsheathed his shining sword and declared a holy war against unrighteous empire of India. The fire that had come leaping from outside into the camp of peace must be quenched." (The book of ten masters, page 83)

And rightly it has been observed by S.R. Sharma that the execution of Guru Arjan (1606), apart from all other consideration, was a great political blunder. The Sikhs were a virile martial group organized on principles conducive to harmony instead of discord. Like Rajputs they could be a valuable source of strength, if they were not antagonized as the British discovered.

The martyrdom of Vth Nanak opened a new avenue of sacrifice, contentment & peaceful co-existence. At war field & place of carnage; both places for them were a matter of life and death. They struggled immensely to protect the down trodden & maintain the dignity of Sikhism. The advent of Aurangzebs', Farukhsiyars', and Nadars' & Durranis' could make no dent in their resolve and they maintained the high morale in their ranks despite so many adversaries. The Sixth Nanak laid the foundation of Khalsa and tenth Nank transformed it into Panth.

Footnotes:-

1. This Baoli was filled up in 1628 by the orders of Shah Jahan, who got a Mosque erected in its place. This mosque was pulled down and Baoli restored by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1834. The Baoli was again destroyed in communal riots in 1947 (**A Short History of Sikhs:Dr Teja Singh-Ganda Singh**)-Editor

The "Spokesman" Weekly, Anniversary Number, 1966.

Impact of Guru Gobind Singh's Philosophy on Modern Society

Rome was not built in a day. This is equally true of the nations, societies and civilizations. Their foundation stones are the deeds and actions of saints, seers and soldiers who toiled for the uplift of humanity and suffer for the cause of truth, righteousness and securing justice for the weak and downtrodden. Their thoughts and beliefs inspire and mould the destinies of the generations to come.

In molding the modern Indian Society, the philosophy and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh, the greatest national hero of India of eighteenth century, have played a notable part. To day India is one of the greatest democratic nations of the world. Guru Gobind Singh has liberally contributed towards the principles of democracy, secularism, comradeship, socialism and patriotism that go to build a great nation on broad basis. He infused sacrament of steel in the heart of feeble and fickle minded so much so that shopkeepers learnt to wield sword and sparrows challenged falcons (all steel). To boost the morale of the masses and to honor the new valiant warriors he eulogized their valor to represent their heroes, braving the onslaughts of inspired hordes. He adopted this style against the tormentor. His inauguration of the Khalsa was the climax of people's movement initiated by Guru Nanak for the liberation of the downtrodden and deliverance of the oppressed groaning under the heels of Moguls tyrants and the priestly class.

Democracy

He bowed low to the Beloved Five to whom he administered the baptism of steel and implored them to baptize him. He was, thus, Lord and disciple rolled into one. He declared the Khalsa to be his Guru. He honored their wishes, and decision of the Khalsa was supreme and final. Their decision that the Guru should quit the battlefield of Chamkaur was an order which he could not but

obey without a murmur. He abolished succession by heredity and restored to the people for the first time in man's history sovereignty, spiritual and temporal. He merged himself in the august rank of the Khalsa and bestowed Guruship in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. He said henceforth the Guruship shall manifest in SGGS¹ and ordained to seek blessings from Shabad. He spiritualized secular activity and to earthly hopes he gave religious sanctions.

In the words of Dr G.C Narang, he was the first Indian leader who taught democratical principles and made his followers regard each other as Bhai and act by Gurmata (Which was the earlier shape of Panchayat Raj of today). He taught them to regard themselves as the chosen of Lord destined to crush tyranny and oppression and look upon themselves as the future rulers of their land. In this way, the Master delegated his own authority to his disciple and their decision was considered to be his own. His sacrament of All Steel (**Sarb Loh**) provoked the slaves into a crusade against slavery. Thus he taught them to develop a self assertive mood and a fighting attitude towards the oppressors which in all ages shall encourage and inspire the slaves.

In our dark days of first quarter of this century, our freedom fighters desired to readopt this attitude to fight the British imperialism. In his letter to Shri Ghanshyam Dass Birla, Lala Lajpat Rai wrote; "Too much emphasis on the world hereafter and lack of an assertive fighting mentality is a great hindrance to secular progress. I am more convinced that our chief work is to change the mentality of our people and make them more ambitious and assertive."

Anandpur –A Republic

In planning, laying out, developing and governing the City of Bliss, the Guru put into practice what philosophers and thinkers like Plato and Chanakya professed. It was *Beghampura* of Shri Ravidass's vision. It was a small republic surrounded by principalities headed by 22 petty hill chiefs. It was a small secular state in times of Great Bigot, Aurangzeb; which gave asylum to poets like Nand Lal Goya and Kunwresh, both victims of fanaticism of Alamgir. Live and let live was the main feature

of the unwritten constitution of the republic. Socialism grew and flourished here under Guru's guidance. Collective farming, common kitchen, voluntary military service were a few of the features which discarded caste distinction and priesthood and encouraged layman to take up leadership in religious, social and political spheres.

The Guru being himself an excellent poet and artist was a patron of poets who produced poetry for the people and artists who were the forerunners of Kangra style of painting. Guru's own works are a rare and successful experience in glorifying the Man and his Creator: God, inspiring and encouraging the weak, meek and humble slaves to fight the imperialism and priest craft with a full faith and blessed them with royalty, prosperity and power.

ਇਨ ਗਰੀਬਨ ਹਮ ਦਯੈ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ।

ਏ ਯਾਦ ਰਖੈਂ ਹਮਰੀ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ।...

In Gariban ham dayai patishahi,

E yad rakhain hamri guriai.....

And blessed them their victory: 'Nishchay Kar Apni Jit Karon'

Saviour of Humanity

It can be said without fear of contradiction that the Punjab is considered as the most modern state of India purely due to the influence of Guru's teachings on the character of ever bold and enterprising Punjabis. In the words of that great bard, of Punjab, Prof. Puran Singh the Punjab lives and revives ever lasting calamities due to inspiration it draws from the Guru's teachings. *Punjab jiunda Guruan de nan te'*

Although Guru Gobind Singh is an all India figure -he played in his childhood at the banks of Ganga at Patna; he spent his boyhood at Makhwal-Anandpur in Shivalik hills; hunted at the banks of Sutlej; he composed verses at the foot of Naina Devi and at the banks of Jamuna at Paonta; he fought at Chamkaur and Mukatsar; he received robes of honor from grateful son of his adversary at Agra and breathed his last at Nanded deep in south -

and whole of India remembers him as its national hero; yet Punjab will ever remain indebted to him.

Hindus being nearer to Sikhs, Hinduism was and especially Hindus of Punjab were more, influenced by Guru's philosophy, Sikh beliefs and tenets than any other religions or sect due to the fact that since the Vedic times the land of five rivers- Panchnad or Madra Desh – has been well known for its progressivism and adoptability to the circumstances how odd they may be.

Modernization is said to consist in self-consciousness, an intelligent awareness of the processes through which one is going and of the possibilities among which one may choose so that increasingly one's history may become what one chooses to make it. Guru Gobind Singh examined the various possibilities and also made his choice which can be well described in his own words: "To uphold the unrighteousness (Dharma) to protect the saintly soul in distress and destroy the evil doers." For this he infused a spirit of fighting in the hearts of fickle minded so much so that shop keepers learnt to wield sword and sparrows challenged the falcons (All Steel). To boost up the morale of the masses and to honour the new vibrant warriors, he eulogized their valour to represent them as heroes. He adopted this style against the self aggrandizing and self glorifying style of Tuzk-i-Jahagiri. In narrating the battle of Bhangani, he showered praises on his soldiers and valiant fighters, Kirpal Udassi, Daya Ram Purohit, Sango Shah, Mahiri Chand, and Gulab Rai. This was the seed of the trees like autography of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

Saviour of Eve

Democracy demanded and envisages good and betterment of all, without distinction of caste, creed and sex. Neglect of the rights of the women has been bane of the society through out the ages. Guru Gobind Singh elevated the Eve also by giving her the advantage of being baptized like a man – a step too bold and revolutionary to which priestly and reactionary forces could hardly reconcile. He called them Kaur (or Kanwar), the heir apparent. In the war like literature produced by him, he has immortalized the eve in her image of Chandi or Durga who reminds Indra, the dethroned King of Devtas that without giving a tough fight to the usurpers one cannot capture his lost

territories. These fiery words goaded Bibi Dip Kaur and Mai Bhago to bravely face the giant-like Mughals and Pathans in Guru's own days and similarly inspired Bibi Sahib Kaur and Rani Jhansi to unleash their swords against the enemies of their mother land.

Panch Sheel

Guru Gobind Singh fought 14 battles right from Bhangani to Mukatsar, he never struck below the belt and he never won a victory with foul means. He restored to their relatives with due honor the women of his enemy; Alif Khan, captured by his soldiers in the battle of Nadaun. The Guru's only grievance against the Aurangzeb was that the emperor did not keep his word like a gentle man. His well known prayer to Almighty broadcast to the nation a thousand one times during wars with China and Pakistan lays down that purity of action and determination to die fighting in a battlefield for a cause should be one's life long goal.

“Deh Shiva var mohi ihe shubh karman te kabhun na tarun”

These and other ideas and ideals of the Guru, based on the truthfulness and honesty of conviction, are the roots of the tree of Panchsheel and that of '*Satyamev Jayate*'. And that they form the basis of the **Charter of Human Rights recognized by U.N.O., the champion of the cause of world peace.** Guru Gobind Singh was the forerunner of this idea. He loved peace and shunned war. He patched the differences between the Rajahs of Nahan and Garhwal. In historic conference at Rawalsar, with the hill Chiefs', he advised them to live in peace and forge a united front against the common enemy.

Equality of Man

The Guru was great not only for his being the last torch bearer of Sikhism. His greatness lies, too, in his broadmindedness leading, in those dark days of bigotry and sectarianism, to universal love and equality of man.

Pir Budhu Shah was proud to have sacrificed his sons and disciples at the altar of Guru's love; because the Guru made no distinction between Mosque and Temple, Pooja and

Namaz. His God was secular and he saluted him saying
“Namastang amazhbe”

In Akal Ustat, he eulogizes the peoples of various colors, climes and creeds living in various parts of the world, e.g., the Firanghees, Kandharis, Arabs, Quraishis, Chinese, Manchurians etc. who worship their God, Lokeshwar (Lord of Common) in their own ways . He attributes all the languages of the world to God.

ਕਹੂੰ ਆਰਬੀ ਤੋਰਕੀ ਪਾਰਸੀ ਹੋ।
ਕਹੂੰ ਪਹਲਵੀ ਪਸਤਵੀ ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤੀ ਹੋ।
ਕਹੂੰ ਦੇਸ ਭਾਖਿਆ ਕਹੂੰ ਦੇਵ ਬਾਨੀ॥
ਕਹੂੰ ਰਾਜ ਬਿਦਯਾ ਕਹੂੰ ਰਾਜਧਾਨੀ॥ 26॥

He was very much pleased to see Bhai Kanhiya serving water alike to the wounded soldiers of Sikh army and those of Enemy. We can rightly claim the Guru as the propounder of the idea behind, and the founder of the first squad of **Red Cross** of today.

He revolted against those who did not recognize the dignity of man. He did not reconcile to the idea that knowledge was the monopoly of the privileged few, the Brahmin and Mullah. To provide opportunity of learning to a man in the street, he sent five ordinary illiterate men to Benaras to become Nirmalas, those who shed the dirt of ignorance. He appointed 52 men of letters both Hindus and Muslims, to render Persian and Sanskrit classics into Bhasha of the people, thus making light of knowledge available to illiterate public.

He was enemy of corruption, misappropriation and desertion from army, which undermine a society. He awarded capital punishment to corrupt Masands who misappropriated public funds, (the tithes collected by them from Sikhs for depositing in Guru's treasury) and he condemned in strong terms and punished strongly those who deserted him in war. In Bachittar Natak (his autobiography) he condemns to the fire of hell two categories of men – firstly who would believe Him to be incarnation of God, and others who desert their leaders in hour of need.

Plural Society

Democracy, based as it is on tolerance, broadmindedness, goes hand in hand with unity in diversity that is plural society. Indian Kings and Emperors both Hindus and Muslims, excepting

a few, accepted his principle as anchor to which ship of their state could be tied for safety and endurance. **Guru Gobind Singh promoted the Indian tradition of secularism and plural society by opposing tooth and nail the clamping of the monolithic social order of Islamic nature as vehemently as his worthy father: Guru Teg Bahadur, did by laying down his life to safe guard the rights of Hindus to perform their religious rites and customs.** Verily it has been said by a Muslim Darvesh that had the Guru Gobind not appeared on the scene, all Hindus would have undergone circumcision. Similarly Bhai Santokh Singh is perfect in saying that but for Guru's crusade against Muslim fanatics, the chanting of Vedic Mantras, reading of Puranas and worship of gods and goddesses would have stopped altogether.

Yet he was not an enemy of Islam or Muslim rulers for their being as such. Rather he blessed the house of Malerkotla one of sworn enemy; with peace and prosperity. He knew it full well that the propagation of Islam by force was a political motive. This was evident from the fact that rulers of Muslim state of Deccan could not escape the expansionist lust of Aurangjeb. It was, therefore, but natural that Guru's call to throw away the yoke of slavery was addressed to Hindus as well Muslims. To quote Swami Vivekanand, **"Guru Gobind Singh made it understood everywhere that the men of age, be they Hindus or Muslman, were living under profound injustice and oppression. Yet in Indian History such an example is indeed very rare. For India's glorification, you must, each of you become Guru Gobind Singh, his true followers."**

Patriotism

Last but not the least is the fact that he was a patriot first and last. He strove and struggled for the emancipation of his country men from the shackles of slavery, political and social. He stood like a rock against the onslaughts of the armies-imperial and antisocial. Though his next door neighbor, hill chiefs were ever hostile to him and they often joined hands against him, yet he never hesitated; in face of national calamity to render any help to these opportunists whenever they sent an S.O.S., to him in the event of a military expedition against them. Battles of Nadaun and Guler are some of the instances.

Though he never thought of acquiring an inch of territory beyond the boundaries of Anandpur: the estate purchased by his father from the then ruler of Bilaspur, yet he reminded and warned his countrymen to remain ever prepared for war against slavery. This and other political theories of his were: '*Judh kiye bin pherphire naih bhoom sabhai apni awdhari*' and '*Shastraan ke adhin hai Raj*'. These were propounded by him in the days of autocracy when the 'Divine rights of Kings' prevailed with all its fury. These urged the Sikhs and non-Sikhs of yore to free their motherland from the clutches of Moguls, Abdalis and British alike.

It were the very glorious and fiery ideals for which our Jawans, be they Asha Rams', Abdul Hamids', Bhupinder Singhs', Keelers' or Rajus', fought valiantly and selflessly with full faith in the common people, resulting in sparrows falling upon falcons with the only object of serving the humanity from annihilated altogether and an ancient civilization being devoured away by another having advantage of imperial.

Really he was a friend of the helpless as observed by Bhai Nand Lal Goya - "Kadrei har Kar Guru Gobind Singh, Be kassan ra yar Guru Gobind Singh"—a quality, a human instinct ever praised by humanitarians and needed in all ages for the preservation of humanity and civilization, with which echoes and re-echoes the daily prayer of the Sikhs in these words:

- '**Jahan Jahan Khalsaji tahan tahan rachhya riyat**' (let there be peace where dwell the noble souls).
- '**Degh Tegh Fateh**' (let those be victors who share their earnings with the needy and protect the oppressed)
- '**Nanak Nam chardi kala, Tere Bhane Sarbat da bhala** (let those who cherish the good of others live in high spirit)

ਆਲਮੇ ਰੋਸ਼ਨ ਜਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ।
ਜਾਨੈ ਦਿਲ ਗੁਲਸ਼ਨ ਜਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ॥

Footnotes

1. In a significant ruling which shall have bearing on thousands of Gurdwaras in the country, the Supreme Court has ruled that the holy book of Sikhs; Sri Guru Granth Sahib is a juristic person and can hold property in its name. Reversing a judgement of Punjab and Haryana High Court, a division bench comprising of Justice M. Jagan Natha Rao and Justice A.P Mishra said, we have no hesitaion to hold that Guru Granth Sahib is Juristic Person. Refer article by Sr. Kashmir Singh, Professor of Law Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, presented in International Siikh conference,2004.- Editor

(The “SPOKESMAN” weekly, Guru Gobind singh Number, 1967)

The Great Misunderstood

Guru Gobind Singh is one of the great men to whom historians and biographers have not been fair. Lack of proper appreciation and prejudice stood in their way to have a true picture of this great leader of mankind, who shaped the destiny of India in seventeenth century. His actions and thoughts have not been interpreted in their true spirit and some writers have miserably failed to grasp and understand his lofty ideals and ideas behind his glorious deeds.

Worship of Durga

Guru Gobind Singh stood like a rock against the tyranny of the Great Bigot and oppression of the priests. In the words of Kavi Santokh Singh, but for the valiant fighter and image of sympathy, love and kindness of Guru Gobind Singh, there would have in India, no religion except Islam and no scripting except Quran and the Vedas and Puranas with all Hindu rites and rituals would have vanished. These words describing one of the many facts and manifold qualities of the Great Guru were taken by some writers as a whole and some total in assessing the aim and object of his life. Subscribing to this view Lala Daulat Rai¹ and Dr. Gokul Chand Narang have painted the Guru as a savior of Hindus alone and a myth has been created by certain writers, of his being a worshipper of Durga for obtaining from the goddess the boon of valor and chivalry like Shivaji for the destruction of malechhas. The tale has been carried to its extremity so much so that he is represented to have performed havan even in his last days to propitiate the goddess at Nanded which ended on the 8th Navratra (Durga Ashtmi) of samvat 1765 in the evening of which day, the Pathan stabbed the Guru.

But in the words of Guru, the only source of his strength and power was Almighty and omnipotent God who was the creator of

Rama, Krishna and Durga and bestower of Power and strength to them to fight the demons.

Tain hi durga soj ke daintan da nas karaiya [Chandi di war]

Hind Ka Pir

Had he been a merely a Hindu leader or Avtar he would not have fought the Hill Chiefs whom he terms as mischief mongers and scoltors:

Manam kushtanam kohian but fitn

Ki aan but-prastand mun but-shikn [Zafarnamah]

In Dasam Granth Sahib Ji (Publisher: Bhai Chattar Singh Jiwan Singh) & Zafarnamah Steek by Sant Kirpal Singh. Couplet reads as:

Manam Kushtanam Kohian but-parasat

Ki aan but parastand mun but shikast. [95]

He was Guru of Hindus and Muslim alike. He turned a Hindu Bairagi into a General and a Muslim General into a Saint. For this, in the words of Gokul Chand Narang, The Hindus of Punjab cannot forget their obligation to Guru Nanak and his successors imbued with the same spirit for the spiritual succor of greatest need. As Tulsi Ramayana in the United Province so the Granth Sahib in the Punjab saved the Hindus from spiritual starvation and prevented them from crossing over religious borne from which no return was possible. But the contention of Narang that Gobind had seen what was vital in the Hindu race and he relieved it with promethean fire, is not supported by facts. Pir Budhu Shah was as dear to him as his Hindu followers. While leaving the battlefield of Chamkaur what he said alone to his enemies was 'Here goes the Pir of Hind' and not 'Pir of Hindus'

Mis Guided Patriot

The Guru has been called a misguided patriot for his restoring to arms and waging wars. The view has perhaps been formed without a deep study of his life and teaching, and taking

into accounts the circumstances in which the Guru was compelled to do so. He was the last person to go to war for self aggrandizement of false prestige. Neither war was a fun or pastime with him. Of his first battle fought at Bhangani he says that for nothing Fateh Shah the ruler of Garhwal angered and fought against him.

Fateh Shah kopa tab Raja

Loh para hamson bin kaja [Bachittar Natak]

Speaking of his fight against Imperial forces he writes to Aurangzeb 'I had no faith in the words you give on oath. I therefore had to resort to the use of sword.' In other words, war was thrust upon him and the time in which he lived was the hour of sword. He was perfectly right to innovate the worship of God armed with bow and arrow, sword and shield.

Gur simar manai kalka khande ki vela [Bhai Gurdas Singh

No Imperial Motive

Some historians have represented him as the enemy of the Muslims and Mughal Government. This is far from truth. He never dreamt of carving a kingdom for himself, to the emperor he says 'God who gave you the crown blessed me with defending the faith.'

Haman ko tura padshahi bidad

Baman daulte din panahi bidad [Fatehnamah-3]

In Bachittar Natak, he says that the separate Kingdoms of Babar and Baba [Nanak] have been established by the divine will:

Babe ke babar ke dou,

Aap kare pamesar sou.

If he aimed at the destruction of Mughal Empire the question arises; why he helped the right heir of Aurangzeb to get the throne? He was enemy of injustice, inequality, intolerance and fountain head of all these evils; the Emperor Alamgir Aurangzeb who, held the absolute power which corrupted him absolutely.

Syed Muhd. Latif

What a pity that in the face of fiery language used in Fatehnamah and Zafarnamah for condemning the misdeeds of the Emperor, the Epistle of Victory, in the eyes of Mohd. Latif is simply an appeal or a prayer to the King i.e. Mehzarnamh. What a distortion of the facts and historical dishonesty on the part of an historian? Being not contented with his own fabrications, he goes on to disbelieve and find fault with others thus trying to eclipse the truth. He asserts 'Dr Trumpp believes that Gobind never obeyed the summons of Aurangjeb to attend the Imperial Camp, but he has given neither authority nor reason for this belief. The whole purpose of the Zafarnamah composed by Gobind in which he exposes wrongs of the Mughal Government tends to show that he proceeds on his journey to visit the Emperor.' Let those inclined to accept the assertion of Latif take note of Guru's words as the authority on which the statement of Trumpp is based. 'I won't come to see you. I will not undertake the journey to his court at the bidding of the Emperor.'

Hazuri na aayam na een rah shavam

Agar Shah ba khaahad na aanja rawam.

[Zafarnamah-88]

Theory of Imperial Service

Similarly the deplorable theories suggesting Guru's accepting the army service under Bahadur Shah and his so accompanying the Emperor to Deccan and that, 'most accounts agree that the Guru Gobind Singh after his flight was, from a sense of his misfortunes and the loss of his children, bereft of his reason and wandered about for a considerable time in the most deplorable condition'; can be dismissed in the words of builder of dejection theory it self: Sir Malcolm. To quote Narang, Bute Shah says that Govind (Guru Gobind Singh) went to Deccan because he was dejected and probably wanted a change and Malcolm holds the same view. Trumpp and Kanhiya Lal make no mention of the service. The words of Malcolm are very suggestive. He says 'When we consider the enthusiastic ardor of his mind, his active habits, his valour and insatiable thirst of

revenge, which he had cherished through life, against murderers of his father and the oppressors of his sect, we cannot think; when that leading passion of his mind must have been increased by the massacre of his children, and the death and mutilation of his most attached followers, that he would have remained inactive much less that he would have sunk into a servant of that Government against which he had been in constant rebellion. Nor it is likely that such a leader as Guru Gobind Singh could ever have been trusted by a Mohammedan Prince.'

Nor can the service theory be reconciled with the Guru's commission of Banda to the leadership of Punjab and his doings there. The events leading to his departure to Deccan including the battle of Mukatsar, his admonitory letter to Aurangzeb as Fatehnamah and Zafarnamah, re-editing the holy Granth Sahib and baptizing 1, 20,000 people according to Trumpp at Damdama Sahib cut across the dejection theory.

Was He A Chess Player?

A story is current that the Guru Sahib played Chess with the Pathan who stabbed him at Nanded. The action attributed to the Guru is against his teachings. A Sikh writer in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh tried to nip the evil in the bud. He was the author of Amrit Gutka a booklet in manuscript preserved in the Punjab Records office, dealing with some outstanding events of the life of the tenth Guru. He says how far it becomes to play chess of the Guru, who taught the Sikhs not to gamble or play chess. The point involved is that only the statement in conformity with the dignity and teachings of the Guru may be accepted as valid.

Saina Pati

But there are some anecdotes written by Sikh poets which put the glorious personality of the gracious Guru into awkward position. For example Sainapati, a court poet of the great Guru who translated Chankaya Niti into Hindi and wrote a biography of the Guru based on the stories narrated to him by other Sikhs, says that Guru married again on his way to Deccan and that Prince Zorawar Singh who as popularly known was bricked alive at Sarhind fought at Chamkaur and escaped alive to meet his

father while on his journey to Deccan. Of Prince Jhujhar Singh who according to popular belief embraced martyrdom at Chamkaur; Sainapati says that he gave forceful replies to the Nawab of Sarhind. This confusion of names of martyr prince's blessed memory has resulted in the tendency on the part of historians to disbelieve the utterances of the Guru. The letter from Nawab of Malerkotla to Aurangzeb alluding to this occurrence is a strong testimony. In Fatehnamah, he plainly mentions the martyrdom of his two sons at Chamkaur. At the time of writing Zafarnamah when the fact of murder in cold blood of other two sons of his at Sarhind became known he explicitly holds the Emperor for massacre of his four sons:

**Chiya shud ki chu bachgan kushteh char,
Ki baki bimand ast pechideh mar.**

Flouting the Facts

Even in the face of these bare facts penned by the Guru himself, historians and research scholars go on making mountains of the mole hill. A Qadiani writer Giani Wahid Hussein basing his thesis 'Guru Gobind Singh ke Bachon ke Qatil,' on the confusion in the names of and details of murder (martyrdom) caused by various Sikh writers, refuse to believe the event of martyrdom of two Sahibzada at Sarhind itself. Narang added the name of Mata Sundri to the list of martyrs of Chamkaur. The editor of Gur Parnalian referred to earlier contended on the basis of a report submitted by the viceroy of Sarhind that only one Sahibzada Fateh Singh was martyred at that place and that in his memory stands the Gurdawara of Faehgarh Sahib.

It is not too late even now when we cried half to such tendencies and paused to understand the great misunderstood.

Footnotes

1. Alluding to this episode, says Lala Daulat Rai that the authenticity of this episode is questionable. It appears that some overzealous followers of the Guru, banking upon the credulity of the ignorant, had concocted such an improbable story. They were misled by the prominence their Guru had given to the Devi in writings. He says

further that Guru Sahib has said in unequivocal terms that he never believed that such beings had any godly powers. How could he then make offerings to them? He condemned in the strongest possible terms the worship of these creations of Akal. **(Page-92: Sahibe-Kamal Guru Gobind Singh)-Editor**

The '**Spokesman**' weekly-Guru Gobind Singh Number.

A Note on Dasam Granth

Crusade against Ignorance

Guru Gobind Singh was a revolutionary. His great mission was aimed at emancipation of souls and abolition of slavery; both physical and mental, as well as elevation of mankind in general. For this colossal work he had to toil hard for twenty four (23^{1/2}) years resulting in the creation of the Khalsa. He employed various means to achieve this end. One of these was production of creative literature which served to educate illiterate masses. Knowledge in those dark days of political, social, religious and economic slavery was the monopoly of the few who had the privilege of having access to Holy Scriptures and secular works. He had therefore to carry on his crusade against ignorance of the people and vested interest of custodian of knowledge. At Paonta, Anandpur and Damadama he established institutions which imparted education to the illiterate and produced literature for the spread and advancement of spiritual knowledge. He sent five Sikhs to Benaras for highest education of Sanskrit and employed Hindu and Muslim scholars, poets and bards for translation of ancient books into literary language of the people then called as *Bhakha*. He himself found time to sit at the banks of river and foot of the hills to sing the praises of God, write the exploits of great sons and daughters of India and collect wisdom of the past and present. Too great is his contribution towards the Punjabi, Persian, and Hindi poetry.

In the words of Dr. G.C.Narang, for any one, who wants to do the work Govind (Guru Gobind Singh) did, it is essential to have all the benefits that education give and to develop all his faculties to the highest degree of perfection possible. He called together great Pundits from Patna and Benaras and great scholars and poets in his service and the names of 52 of them have been handed down to posterity. He assiduously learnt all they could teach him and hereditary as a gift of poetry had been in his

family, he developed a style of Hindi poetry which has remained unsurpassed since his times. (Transformation of Sikhism p.125)

Compilation of Dasam Granth

The collection of the Tenth Guru's works is called *Daswen Patshah da Granth* or *Dasam Granth*. Its original copy as compiled under his immediate supervision was lost with other valuables at the time of sack of Anandpur. It was re-edited and compiled again in the first instance by Bhai Mani Singh in 1782 Bik, and by Baba Dip Singh Shahid in 1804 Bik. The first version had *Hakayats* at the end and the other ended with *Asphotak kabit*. These were followed by the version compiled by Bhai Sukha Singh Granthi of Patna Sahib in 1832 Bik. It is known as *Patna Di Misal* which has 210 additional verses; including *Sukhmana*, *Ankpali* and *Devi ke Chhakke*. A copy of the same is preserved at Akal Takhat, Amritsar. Another name that can be mentioned in this connection is that of Bhai Charht Singh son of Bhai Sukha Singh, who could forge signatures of Guru Gobind Singh to the satisfaction of some simple minded but well do Sikhs. He prepared copies of Patna version with some additional verses one of which was acquired by Maharaja of Patiala. Giani Gyan Singh mentions to have seen it at Moti Bagh Palace as quoted by him in *Panth Parkash*.

Giani Gian Singh says in *Path Parkash*:

ਸੁਖਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ ਔਰ
ਰਚੀ ਬੀੜ ਪਟਨੇ ਮੇਂ ਗੋਰ।
ਅਠਾਰਾਂ ਸੈ ਬਤੀ ਮਾਹੈ।
ਰਖਿਓ ਸੁਖਮਨਾ ਛਕੇ ਵਾ ਹੋ।
ਅੰਕਪਲੀ ਲੋ ਅਨਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ,
ਰਾਖੇ ਓਨ ਆਪਨੇ ਵੰਗ।
ਭੋਗ ਛੱਕ ਪਰ ਪਾਯ ਤਾਂਹਿ,
ਤੀਨ ਬੀੜ ਹੋਈ ਬਿਧਿ ਯਾਂਹ।
ਪੁਨਾਂ ਚੜਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂਕੇ ਪੂਤ,
ਔਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਇਕ ਵੈੱਸਾ ਕੀਉ।
ਸੋ ਬਾਵੇ ਹਾਕਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਲੀਉ।

ਸੋ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ ਮੋਤੀ ਬਾਗ,
ਹੈ ਅਬ ਹਮਨੇ ਪਿਖੁਯੋ ਬਿਲਾਗ। ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼, ਪੰਨਾ 306

Later on this Granth was sent to Sikh reference library Amritsar. It is feared that the same has been destroyed during Operation Blue star.

Guru Gobind Singh wrote 176 verses in various meters (*Chhands*) under different pen names as Gobind, Dasam, Ram, Shyam, etc. which gave rise to doubt that the whole writings of Dasam Granth are not the compositions of the Guru so much so that in the opinion of Cunningham, initiatory verse alone, of *Akal Ustat* is the composition of Guru. On the other hand there were persons who were interested in passing on their own writings as those of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Kahan Singh tells us that there is also a '*Var Sri Bhagauti ji ki*' other than that composed by the Guru included in a version of Dasam Granth. (Vide p.3267-68 of Mahan Kosh) Similarly some *Rahtnamas*, *Sau Sakhi*, *Sarb Loh Granth*, *Bijai Mukat*, *Ugardanti and Paintis Akhri* by one Surjan Singh were wrongly regarded as '*Sri Mukh Vak Patshahi Daswin*', for which our competitive production of *Sunder Gutkas* is mainly responsible. Now another work known as *Gobind Gita* has recently been attributed to the Guru's name and a Persian letter addressed by him to Aurangzeb under the name of *Fateh Nama* and *Gobind Gita* have been unearthed. ('*Sri Sarb Loh Granth Sahib ji*', attributed to Tenth Master has been published by Singh Sahib Baba Santa Singh ji, Jathedar Chhianven Karori and digitized by Parbhjot Singh, dated 21 Oct, 2003-Editor).

According to Prof. Piara Singh Padam 'Dasam Granth' originally comprised of 1, 27,000 verses, but in its printed form we see hardly 17,400 of them. Giani Partap Singh places the total number of verses at 172531/2 and Dr. Tarlochan Singh at 17195 as shown below.

Name of Bani	Number of verses as given by		
	Piara Singh	PartapSingh	TirlochanSingh
1. Jap Sahib	199	199	199
2. Akal Ustat	271	2711/2	271
3. Bachittar	6548	-	-
Natak			
* Apni Katha		471	471
* Two Chandi		495	495
Charitars			
* Avtars of		4370	4365
Vishnu			
* Avtars of			
Brahma		345	323
* Avatar of			
Rudra		856	856
* Mir Mehdi		11	11
4. Shastar Nam			
Mala	1318	1318	1318
5. Chandi	55	55	55
Di-var			
6. Gian Parbodh	336	336	336
7. Charitro			
Pakhyan	7559	7551	7555
8. Persian			
Verses	861	867	868
9. Miscellaneous	194 (Appx)		
* Asphotak			
Chhand	59	57	-
* Shabd Ragan ke-		41	39
* Swayyie	-	-	33
* Sadd, Khyal			
& Majh	-	10	
<hr/>			
	17400	17253 ^{1/2}	17195
<hr/>			

In the words of Dr. Trilochan Singh, the imagination of Guru Gobind Singh touched the intangible, it saw the invisible, it heard

the inaudible and it gave body and shape to inconceivable. It gathered gems from all mines, and gold from all sands, pearls from all seas and songs from every battle of Dharma. Guru Gobind Singh bequeathed to mankind a literary historical and philosophical estate which time cannot destroy.... He sang of his God and soul. He sang of creation and rise and fall of civilizations. He sang of the wars of Dharma, of the heroes of the glorious past of India and of the figurative gods and goddesses of mythology. He sang of the lovers and martyrs of truth. The fever of age, the misery of the people, the degradation of the country and its culture, the mute appeals of the oppressed became the problems of his life which he solved with the pen, the sword, the mind and his God like spirit. (The Sikh Review, April 1955)

This is more or less the theme of the Persian writings of the Guru. Hakayts are stories of sex-psychology exactly like those of Charitro Pakhyān. Zafarnamah is the second epistle of victory addressed to Aurangjeb which is a document of immense importance. It gives vivid description of the battle of Chamkaur. The Guru claims and proclaims his victory in this battle and condemns the moral degradation of the Emperor and his Generals and Governors. Exposing him he told him frankly that he (Aurangjeb) neither recognized God nor did he have belief in Muhammad. He forewarned him of his fall and ruination of his kingdom and asked him to read the writing of the wall.

Chiya shud ki chun bachgan kushteh char.

Ki baki bi-maand ast pechideh mar [Zafarnamah-78]

'You killed my four sons does not matter. There remains the Khalsa (Coiled Reptile) to confront you.' The Guru's aim was not to wreak vengeance upon the Emperor. Only to purge the soul of great Bigot of history was his intention.

The Guru's Punjabi writings are few say about sixty verses at the most. Apart from *Khyal*, *Sadd* and *Var Sri Bhagauti ki* there is sprinkling of Punjabi verses here and there in *Dasam Granth* e.g. Gopi's message to Lord Krishna which occurs in *Triya Charitra*. *Var Sri Bhagauti ji ki* also known as *Chandi-di-var* is translation of Durga's explicit contained in *Devi Bhagvat Puran*.

Its opening stanza forms beginning of Ardas, our national prayer. As the *Hakayats* are abridged Persian version of Triya Charitar with all flavors and tinge of Persian literature, Chandi di var is condensed Punjabi form of *Chandi Charitar*. Its importance lies mainly in the subject being the favorite of the author, who has not missed any chance to include it here and there in *Dasam Granth* where it could fit. Chandi Charitar, Ukat Bilas is based on *Padam Puran*. The plot of second *Chandi Charitar* has been taken from *Markande Puran*. The story in its another form has also found place in Charitro Pakhyan. The Guru has given Punjabi tinge to the story in *Chandi di Var* by drawing similes from daily life of the Punjab. He presents *Durga* as a village belle fond of bathing in ponds and rivulets, on the banks of which Inder the fugitive King of heaven has to wait for her arrival. When the God King narrates his pathetic story of usurpation of his throne by demons, she simply laughs and assures the King of her help.

The story of Chandi is thus a women's story surpassing the might of a man. In the words of McAuliffe it was also meant for being chanted for war like purposes so that even cowards on hearing it might obtain courage and the hearts of the brave beat with fourfold enthusiasm, such being the achievements of a women what ought not a brave man accomplish.

Now we turn to Bhakha or Hindi composition whose literary and poetic aspects is very great. Some parts of them, in the opinion of G.C.Narang deserve the very highest place in the ranks of Hindi poetry on the narrative and epic kind. Jap and Akal Ustat are purely praises of God. In Jap, there are 735 epithets of God sung in ten different meters the most noteworthy of which is *Ek-akhri-chhand* that is verse with single lines. These are all monosyllable.

***Ajai *Alai *Abhai *Abhu *Aju *Anas *Akas**

In *Akal Ustat* too one comes across noble attributes of God spoken in finest word like this.

Somewhere in the body of a Hindu you recite the Gyatri in secret. Somewhere like a Muslim you shout the Azan. Simultaneously therein a new conception of God with an epithet

of 'All steel has been given': "*Sarb Loh ki rachcha ham hai*" Says he, '**All steel protects us**'. **Sarb Loh** or **All Steel** stands for the sword which is a symbol, he attributed to God. Through such fire emitting verses he infused martial spirit in the down trodden people. The observation made in this connection by Edmund Candler in "Mantle of the East" should not be missed. Very rightly he says 'When Guru Govind Singh inaugurated the sacrament of steel, he proved himself a wise and far sighted leader. For, of all material things which genius has inspired with spiritual significance steel is the truest and uncompromising. Let humanitarians prate as they will, there never has been a race who have not been purged and refined by it. In some it is the only combater of grossness and monster of self. To the Khalsa it gave a cause and welded them into a nation in those dark days of Mohammedan rule when the Sikh was slain at sight and no quarter was given to him. It drove them to gallant crusades in which they rode to Amritsar in the dead of night and galloped back through the enemy lines purified. Hundreds were slain, but not one abjured his faith or perjured his soul to preserve his muddy vesture of decay.'

A lacuna is felt in the arrangement of last 71^{1/2} verses of Akal Ustat, which in the opinion of some scholars do not conform to the main theme of the composition. In ten verses from 201 to 210 there are several questions regarding life and death, heaven and hell, wise and fool etc, without answers. They may form part of Gian Parbodh, which is a work of philosophical type. Similarly verses from 211 to 230 fit more properly in the seventh chapter of second Chandi Charitar. The rest may be considered as prologue to Bachhitar Natak. The modern research in the scriptures of Guru Gobind Singh shows that the verses of Akal Ustat beyond two hundred ones are misfit in its present structure. Ten 'dohras' (201-210) are simply interrogative in nature, the answers to questions put there in being missing. Three different versions of supposed answers have been discovered by Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha, Giani Narain Singh Pandit and Sardar Shamsheer Singh Ashok. Next come twenty Diragh Tirbhangi Chhands (211-230) which should aptly fit in with the ten stanzas in the same meter, occurring in 7th Chapter of second Chandi

Charitra. This is because number of original Sanskrit verses of Bhagvati Padya Pushpanjli which the Guru has rendered into Hindi, is thirty. The rest of the verses are the prologue to Bachittar Natak. The view is confirmed by the fact that the concluding stanza is incomplete being consisted of two lines instead of four. It seems that these 72 stanzas have been added to Akal Ustat abruptly by the compilers of Dasam Granth after the death of Guru.

As regards the place of compilation of this collection (Granth) Cunningham and Daulat Rai give it as Damdama Sahib which is not correct, undoubtedly it is true that some compositions included in the book were written at Paonta Sahib.

Gyan Parbodh: according to Cunningham has been mostly taken from Mahabharata. A major portion of it is lost. Out of 336 verses, 125 form the introduction. The following verses indicate how the Guru planned the work.

**Ik raj dharam ik dharam dan
Ik bhog dharam, ik mochhdan**

We have it from Dr. Trilochan Singh that the Guru discussed the four noble ways of life.

- **Raj dharm (religion through political service)**
- **Dan dharm (religion of charity)**
- **Bhog dharm (religion through pious. life of house holder)**
- **Moksh dharm (religion of salvation)**

The available verses contain discussion on first two topics only. The purpose of this great work was to show that the highest religion of a man was Nam dharm (enlightenment through the word incarnate). It is said that Guru composed half of these verses, amidst a fierce battle when guns were booming, arrows were raining and sabers rattling, which speaks of Guru's supreme power of concentrating his mental faculties.

Shashtar Nam Mala is the name of string of weapons. The names of various weapons have been recapitulated. The weapons have been praised as Guru, Pir etc., (in the sense of God)

**Ass Kirpan Khando Kharag Tupak Tabar aur Tir
Saif Sirohi Sehthi yaho Hamare Pir.**

Charitro Pakhyan, commonly known as 'Istri Charittar' is not the wiles of women only. They also include instances of men who turned faithless to their beloved without least compunction. These four hundred four stories whose original number is 405, occupy nearly half of the Granth. They were completed on Sunday, the Bhadon Shudhi Ashtami, 1753 Bik; on the banks of river Sutlej. These include stories of lovers like Heer Ranjha, Sohni Mahinwal, Mirza Sahiban, Radha Krishan etc., brave women like Chandi and Kaikeyi and boys of high moral character like Puran Bhagat who did not respond to amorous advances of his step mother. There are stories from the lives of Akabar, Jehangir, Shahjahan, Aurangzeb and Alexander. There are stories from the court of China, Rome, Portugal and France etc. 'the moral of sinful stories is that crime never pays. **The main teaching is: love thy legal wife ever and so much that not even in a dream should you share the bed of other women.'**

In the words of Dr. Trilochan Singh these stories viewed as *tout ensemble* in full and complete form they are a drama of international life. The dance of vices and virtue is made sublime here and there with faith and religious emotion by the certainty of expiation and emotion of fullness of atoning equity where virtue is victorious and vice is vanquished, and the ways of God are justified to man....All the splendor and squalor the beauty and baseness of life are here. The genius of story teller quickens the dry bones of history and by adding fiction to the facts revives the dead past. Here there is a picture gallery of weird and striking adventures; there are idyllic peaces of love, for-saken or betrayed or requited love. Pathos and humor alternate with artistic contrast. (The Sikh Review-July, 55. P-27).

Till there are sins, crimes, and moral degradation, in the world, soldiers of literary field will continue fighting by producing works in the chain of Chritriopakhyan. The appearance of Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov points the direction in which wind of morality is still blowing.

Bachittar Natak

This is another monumental work of the Guru for the spread of knowledge. This collection may be called the encyclopedia of ancient Hindu mythology of Pre- Aryan and Aryan ages. It deals with, in detail the stories of past incarnations of Vishnu, Brahama and Shiva as those of Kalki and Mir Mehdi which are yet to appear on the stage of the world. No where else such detailed and compact information on the subject can be found.

The composition opens with salutation to the sword as a symbol of God. '*Namaskar Sri Kharag ko*'. Then occurs there, the soul stirring invocation to the weapons in four lines beginning with '*Khag Khand bihandang*' which in G.C.Narang's opinion, are among the finest of their kind to be met with, in any literature of the world. The Guru cherished the Sword as an object of worship and some of his finest verses were those he employed to invoke its aid. The following four verses of Guru Gobind Singh forming an invocation to Sword are among the finest of their kind, to be met with in any literature of the world and they are almost wholly in Sanskrit. They will be easily understood in any part of India.

**Khag khand behundam khal dal khandam
Ati ran mandam barbandam
Bhuj dand akhandam tej prachandam
Jot amndam bhan prabham
Sukh santa karnam durmat darnam
Kilvikh harnam us sanam
Jai jai jag karan sarishti ubaran mam pritparan
jai tegam.**

In autobiography *Apni Katha* the writer has thrown light on the genesis of the world, origin of Bedis and Sodhis, his own birth and childhood, martyrdom of his father, battles of Nadaun and Guler. The narrative ends with invasion of the Prince and Ahdis in 1753 Bik, The year in which Charitropakhyan was completed. This is followed by stories of Avtars and Chandi Charittars.

Although the Guru mostly wrote his verses in poetic meters, which was a departure from the tradition of his predecessor Gurus whose hymns are in musical meters, yet there are also some hymns from his pen in musical meters like Devgandhari, Ramkali etc. Some of these are devotional songs; the others deal with the qualities of a true *Jogi* and *Sanyasi*; *Khyal* and *Sadd* which describe the yearning of the Guru for God and that of the Sikhs for the Guru: claim historical importance.

Sharing the opinion of Sir Gokul Chand Narang; "The Vachitra Natak or the wondrous drama is Gobind's own contribution, forming an account of his family, his mission of reformation and his wars with hill Rajas and the imperial forces. The account given by the Guru of his previous life and the circumstances which led to his birth read like an episode from the Puranas and all its details are saturated with the spirit of Hindu mythology" it is generally understood the Bachittar Natak is only the autobiography of Guru Gobind Singh. But actually it consists of following works of Guru: -

1. Autobiography
2. 24 Incarnations of Vishnu
3. Sub-carnations of Rudra and Brahma.
4. Chandi Charitra Ukt Bilas
5. Chandi Charitra (Trambi Mahatam)
6. Shabad Hazare
7. 32 Swayyias.

Introduction

According to Bhai Randhir Singh History Research Scholar of S.G.P.C. the last 72 verses (201 to 272) of Akal Ustat form the introduction to Bachittar Natak opening with:

**Ek samai Sri Atma uchrio mat sio bain
Sab partap Jagdis ko kaho sakal bidh tain [201]**

It was at the occasion of Baisakhi of 1754 Bikrami (Monday, the 29th March 1697) that a holy soul implored the Guru to enlighten the Sikhs of the genesis of the World:

**Tum kaho dev sarbang bichar
Jim kia aap karte pasar [231]**

The compilation of these works was completed in the month of *Har* 1755 Bikrami (June- July 1698), when the Dasam Granth in its original form came into existence under the personal supervision of the Guru. (Prem Sumarg, Edited by Sardar Randhir Singh p 27]

Like Guru Nanak, the personal opinion of Guru Gobind Singh regarding creation of the world is that a creature is unable to know the genesis of the universe.

Tumra lakha na jae pasara

Keh bidh saja pratham sansara [17] Chaupai -Editor

Autobiography

To achieve the above mentioned objects the Guru embarked upon editing of his writings in such a way as to present a panorama of thoughts on God, genesis of the universe, religion, sociology, warfare and politics etc, and representative of different ages. As usual with him at the very outset he invoked the aid of **Shri Kharag**-the Sword. For successful completion of the work then he described the genesis of the world in the Puranic way. The Lord creating the world of gods and demons from the soiled matter of his ears. Then came the great men sent by God for the spread of religion, known as Avatars', Gurus' and Prophets'. Almost all of them preached their creed aggrandizing themselves alone in such a way that people began to worship them as God. God reacted against this evil and honored the dynasty of Bedis with the birth of Guru Nanak. The author gives a graphic and detailed account of Bedis and Sodhis and their inter-relations giving a dramatic touch to history by intermingling the fiction with facts, the Sodhis giving away their kingdom as an offering for good recitation of Vedas, the Bedis in their turn promising to return to Sodhis the kingdom in the shape of Guru ship.

Giani Partap Singh Ex- Jathedar, Akal Takhat says that Bachittar Natak is a drama not to be staged. It has no dialogue but of course a story on the pattern of Hanuman Natak by Pandit Hirde Ram, the book very much loved by Guru Gobind Singh. Thus it is not history pure and simple. But it cannot be denied that historical element is there mixed with fiction. This was, of

course, the ancient style of historiography in India handed down to the Guru who adopted it with some difference.

After narrating briefly the glorious deeds of his predecessors including the most outstanding event of far reaching effect of Aurangzeb's reign, viz martyrdom of his worthy father in the capital of Mughal Empire, he tells his own story (Apni Katha) right from his hard penance and deep meditation performed by him in his previous life in snow capped mountains at Hemkunt, the place marked by hallowed memory of Panduraj*, father of five Pandavas of Mahabharata fame.

***Sapt sring tih nam kahava Pandu Raj Jah Jog kamava.**

Tah ham adbhik tapsya Sadhi.

[Bachitar Natak, Chapter, 6/3-1]- Editor

Including the expedition under took by imperial troops of Ahdis against the hill chiefs under the orders of Prince Muazzam in 1753 Bikrami (1696) of Christian era. Anandpur remained untouched in this event owing to intercession of Bhai Nand Lal Goya; Mir Munshi of the Prince.

Description of warfare being his pet subject, he has chosen to depict the battle of Bhangani, Nadaun and Guler with minute details of actions of fighters and sound produced thereby i.e., rattling of sabers, sound of issuance of arrows, blowing of bugles, beating of drums, neighing of horses and advancing forward and being pushed back of swordsmen defending themselves with shields. This description of warfare relates to kalyug, or Mughal period of Indian history, to be more appropriate.

Chandi Charitras

To record the methods of warfare prevalent in pre-Aryan age he gives us exploits of Durga popularly known as Chandi Charitra, which in the words of Sir Gokul Chand Narang are described in epic verse of a kind which has no parallel in Hindi literature.

The stories have been taken from Markande Puran and Devi Bhagwat Puran to rouse the dormant energies of the women folk that the early poets and dramatists had been condemning as frailty, footwear, golden she cobra. The epic was also employed

to put to shame the coward trampled over by the tyrant Mughals. In this story Durga simply laughs when the Lord of Gods Indra comes to seek her help against the buffalo demon Mehkhasur who had usurped his kingdom. She points out to him that the only way of regaining the lost kingdom was the war. But finding Indra cold towards her suggestion she undertakes the arduous task herself and mounting on the Lion dashes to battle ground to challenge and fight the mighty demons one after the other. She gave tough battle to and killed nine Rakshas; Madhu, Kaitabh, Mehkha, Dhumarlochan, Mund, Chand, Raktabij, Sumbh and Nisumubh.

It is believed that the Guru wrote Chandi Charita *Ukt Bilas* based on Markande's Durga Shapt Shati of 700 Shlokas during his sojourn at Paonta and second Chandi Charitra based on Devi Bhagvat Puran in 1752 Bikrami at Anandpur. He expected the cowards to resort to arms as and when they read his poetry:

Parhe sum sofi lare hoe age.

Avtar katha

Now we pass on to the stories of incarnation of Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva. Twenty four incarnation of Vishnu are; Machh, Kachh, Nar, Narayan, Mohini, Vairah, Narsingh, Bawan, Parasram, Brahma, Rudra, Jalandhar, Vishnu, Madhusudan, Arhant, Manu, Dhanantar, Suraj, Chandra, Rama, Krishna, Arjun, Buddha, Nehkalank. Outstanding among these are Rama and Krishna who occupy prominent positions in Hindu mythology of Aryan age. Their exploits have played a conspicuous part in molding the lives of their country men so much so that they (Avtars) became objects of worship of Vaishnavites. But the devotees totally ignored and overlooked the martial spirit, urge for action and readiness for sacrifice with which their Gods plunged in the battlefield and stood like a rock against the tyrant of their ages—Ravana and Kansas. The Guru presented prominently the martial aspect of Avtars whether or not some of them actually fought in lives. To bring out clearly the fighting role of the hero which may goad the reader into action, was the first and last aim of the Guru. He gave a slogan and an ideal of Dharma Yudh- war of Religion-against the tyrants

who styled themselves as Ghazis dead drunk with inspiration of fighting and exterminating root and branch of Kafirs. In Krishna Avatar he said:

**Dharam katha bhagaut ki bhakha kari banaye
Awar wasna nahin Prabh dharam yudh ke chhaye.**

Similarly he included the stories of seven 'up-Avtars of Brahma (namely Valmiki, Kashyaup, Shankracharya, Vachaspati, Khat-Shastri and Kalidas) and two of Rudra or Shiv Ji, being Dattatreya and Parasnath. This was not all and author was not contented with the experience of the past. He peeped into the future and narrated the advent of Mir Mehdi who is believed yet to appear after the mission of Kalki is finished.

Marvellous contribution

Apart from the object of compilation of martial history of ancient India which he achieved by presenting these incarnations as field marshals, statesmen and politicians of their times, he has rendered a unique service in the field of literature by elevating the figures as Avtars of Brahma, the author of Vedas. This was a novel idea indeed. Thus Bachittar Natak is a marvelous encyclopedia of ancient learning and Hindu mythology made available to Indians in general and Sikhs in particular enabling them to understand the mythology and special terminology used in Guru Granth Sahib.

Epilogue

In the end come Battis Swayyais the number of which has risen to thirty three, thanks to the expansionist tendency of publishers of Sunder Gutkas. In the words of G.C.Narang the thirty two stanzas have been composed in condemnation of idolatry, Phariseeism, sectarian prejudice and bigotry extolling the love of God above all nominal adherence to the Puranas and Koran. The opening stanza deals with the duties and qualities of head and heart of the real Khalsa or the ideal man of Guru's conception. Then, layman is cautioned against the evil of idol worship, and story of incarnation supported by logical inferences from the lives of Rama and Krishna earlier depicted by him in 'Chubis Avtar'. This master piece of poetry presents a vivid

picture of the length to which a so called religious man or communalist can steep low in the name of religion, his sins putting to shame the blackest sins itself.

**Pap kro parmārth kai
Jih papan te aīt paap ljai**

It appears from the writings of Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu and Kahan Singh Nabha that these Sawaiyyas (since substituted by ten Sawaiyyas of Akal Ustat) were read at the baptismal ceremony of Sikhs, and the latter in his work 'Gurmat Sudhakar' desired the old practice to revive.

The subject matter of the Sawayyais has been further dealt with in nine lyrics known as 'Shaabd Ragan ke' or 'Shabd Hazare' usually found inserted in Sundar Gutkas at the end of Jap Sahib. These have been composed by great lyricist in six musical metres namely Ram kali (3), Sorth(1), Kalyan(1), Tilang kafi (1), Bilawal (1), and Devgandhari (2), defining interalia, the characteristic of a true sanyasi (**Re man aiyso kar sanyasa**) and a real Jogi (**Re man eh bidh jog kamayo**).

These include Khayal in Ram Kali Rag containing Guru's historic utterance in the groves of Machhiwara. '**Mittar piyare nu hal muridan da kehna**'.

How much hard hour the Guru had to put in to build up the monumental work can be judged from the number of stanzas incorporated therein:

1. Introduction	42
2. Autobiography	471
3. Two Chandi Charitras	459
4. Incarnation of Vishnu	4370
5. Mir Mehdi	11
6. Sub incarnation of	
1) Brahma	345
2) Rudra	856
7. Shabads	9
8. Sawaiyyas	32

6595

(Vide page 10-11, Daswen Patshah de Granth da Itihas by Sardar Randhir Singh)

How strange looks the fact, in face of the opinion held by Cunningham that the initiatory verses of the Bachittar Natak alone is the composition of Gobind and assertions made by some modern writers that Avatar Katha and Chandi Charitars are the works of court poets of the Guru. The assertions and opinions are baseless in view of hard facts that Guru himself narrates his own poetry (Apni Katha) in the first person saying “**Main Ab Apni Katha Bakhano**”. Moreover the contention and comment on idolatry and theory of incarnation of God found here and there in Avatar Katha are such as cannot be expected from a court poet. The epilogues by the court poets merely express their gratitude towards the Guru in token of their receipt of handsome rewards.

In regard to the Guru's author-ship of Avatar Katha one can only find therein the same style of narration in first person as followed in Apni Katha.

Ab chaubis uchron avtara

True to his ideals and ideology in Krishna Avatar he asserts his individuality when he says frankly that he is son of a valiant fighter that is a Kashtriya and not a passive priest the Brahmin. At the end of Ram Avatar he places the protection invoked of God above the solace found in Chanting the Quran and Puran or help expected from Ram and Rahim. This is sufficient to prove that the entire work done on Bachittar Natak unmistakably bears the stamp of the Guru and he is the sole author of this colossal work.

Zafarnamah

Some Doubts and Misunderstandings

Like its author – The Great Misunderstood; **Zafarnamah** has also been misunderstood by critics. The epistle of victory has been misinterpreted by Syed Mohd. Latif and misrepresented it as a memorandum of grievances ie Mehzarnamah. According to Cunningham, the letter accompanied a series of parables admonitory of Kings. Nanak Chand Naz believes that the first

letter *Fatehnamah* formed a part of it. Scholars also differ on the number of verses contained in the letter, which is generally accepted as 111. There are 112 verses, including four in Braj Bhasha in *Zafarnamah* (published by Language Department, Punjab). Kesar Singh Chhibar author of '*Bansawali-namah Dassan Patshahian Ka*' says that the Guru composed 1400 couplets in Persian:

**Othe Sahib kangar nun kuch kar gaiye
Othe jae baint chuda sai uchrat bhaiye.**

The word 'Chauda' and 'Sai' have been construed by Dr. Jit Singh Sital to mean fourteen plus hundred as generally understood. (*Samen-di-Vangar, Guru Gobind Singh Number 1967, Page 39*)

It is a fact that *Zafarnamah* was written at Dina-Kangar during Guru's sojourn there before he fought a battle at Mukatsar with Vazir Khan which is supported by a couplet in the epistle inviting Aurangzeb to meet him at Kangar. Notwithstanding it, there are writers like Sainapati who think that it was written at Damdama after the battle of Mukatsar mainly due to their not having seen the document. Those who have worked on it have interpreted it in their own way. The following couplet being, in his opinion derogatory of the great scribe has been discarded and excluded from his Urdu translation by Shri Nanak Chand Naz, in verse, of *Zafarnamah*:

**Shahan-shah ra banda-e chaakr-am
Agar hukm aa-yed b-jaan haazar-am [62]**

Bhai Vir Singh attributes this verse meaning, 'we are servants of the Emperor and offer our life at his bidding'-to God and not Aurangzeb to whom the Guru in his opinion openly told, 'I will not enter thy presence nor travel on the same road with thee, 'Incidentally, Sainapati says that the Guru himself sought an interview with the Emperor:

***Shah Aurang ko likha ih bhant so chahta ap toh pas
aiyo.
Qual biquial sab log tere bheye jang ko bhed aise
bataiyo.**

This is contrary to the view held by Dr.G.C.Narang that to a letter received from Aurangzeb requiring his presence at Delhi. The Guru replied in a long epistle couched in a spirited Persian verse stating all the wrong that had been done to him and justifying his recourse to sword as ultimate remedy. Prof Indu Bhushan Bannerjee says that Zafarnamah is a poetic composition or dramatization of the epistle sent to Aurangzeb and that the communication actually dispatched and received by the Emperor was different. Prof Gurbachan Singh Talib incline to concur in Bannerjee's view finds it to be sound and historically as well as stylishly more convincing. Elucidating his point the learned Professor observes, that diplomatic correspondence in those times was in prose and manner of expression was not only extremely courteous but decorous; that was the convention and accepted code. He says further that verse was used only while dramatizing or reporting letters written in various contexts, such as defiance, supplication, love etc; as these occur in epics and other narrative fictions such as Firdausi's *Shahnamah* and Nizami's *Sikandar Nameh*. Adds he, It is easy to believe that Zafarnamah being a serious official communication addressed to the sovereign on the throne containing complaint of heinous crimes (the murder of Sahibzadas at Sarhind and breach of safe conduct given to the Guru at Anandpur) would not be in a style practiced at court for such correspondence. The Guru had in his entourage a number of scholars, among them was the Persian poet Bhai Nand Lal who is reported to have been connected in some capacity with the Mughal court. To attribute ignorance of court procedure to those who waited on the Guru, advised him and carried out his work is to assume what is manifestly unjustified. Zafarnamah is in the same metre in which all great *Masnavis* or Epic poems including the greatest Zafarnamah are composed. It reads therefore, style apart like an epistle from one of Mansavis. In its opening it contains the usual preambles affirming faith in God –the God of Guru Gobind Singh's conception. In the middle of portion called (no doubt by the poet who did the versification later) Dastan or the Tale, the Guru's charges against the Emperor's functionaries are contained. These relate to breach of faith which herein is attributed in very severe

language to the Emperor him self. Then there is a tune of defiance and determination to wage war, along with the famous couplet (Itself a quotation from Sadi's Gulestan)

**Chun kar az hameh hilte dar guzasht
Halal ast burdan ba shamshir dast. [22]**

When all other resources are rendered unavailing it is justified then to unsheathe the sword.

Towards the end is conventional praise of the Emperor, quite out of keeping with the severity of his condemnation in the body of *Dastan*.

There is another fragment recently discovered, consisting of twenty complete couplets and one incomplete which has been called **Fatahnamah**. This is in the same metre as *Zafarnamah* — only its style is forceful and of a higher literary quality than *Zafarnamah*. This is perhaps a parallel dramatization by another poet. (*Souvenir in commemoration of the Tercentenary of Tenth Sikh Guru- Khalsa College, Amritsar* –pages 34-36)

Dr Ganda Singh speaks in similar terms in respect of *Fatehnamah* presuming that Bhai Nand Lal might have versified Guru's communication to Emperor under his orders. He also thinks that *Fatehnamah* is incomplete piece of **Zafarnamah**. (*Makhaz-i-Tawarikh-i-Sikhan* –Vol 1-pages 62-64).

A careful study of two letters reveals that they are two communications independent of each other for the following reasons. Had they been one complete communication there was no fun in inserting invocation to God twice. **Fatehnamah**, so christened by Sardar Kapur Singh, Ex I.C.S., in the present form opens with the words:

**Banam-i-khudawand tegh-o-tabar
Khudawand tir-o-sanan-o-sipar**

And *Zafarnamah* as under:

**Kamaal-e karaamat kaa-yam kareem
Raza baksh razak rahaako rahim [1]**

Also the reference to the martyrdom of Guru's sons in the two letters differs in that the earlier communication (Fatehnamah) issued from Machhiwara just after the battle of Chamkaur, mentions fall in the battlefield of two elder sons of Guru (Prince Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh) while the other written later from Dina Kangar when the news of murder in cold blood of his two younger sons (Princes Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh) at the hands of Nawab Wazir Khan of Sarhind had reached him, refers to murder of his four sons for which the Guru holds the Emperor responsible:

**Chiya shud ki chu bachgan kushteh char
Ki baki bi-maand ast pechideh maar [78]**

(Matters little that you murdered my four sons when the coiling cobra (the Khalsa) is still alive. Further the mode of meeting the Emperor suggested in the two documents differs. Fatehnamah challenges the Emperor for a hand to hand fight in a battle field and Zafarnamah invites Aurangzeb for negotiation at Kangar where the Guru was sojourning at the moment.

Zafarnamah is a letter from a religious leader whose aim in life was to uphold righteousness and who did not admit of and observe any formality in addressing the Emperor. Contrary to conventional mode of addressing him with his magnifying titles and dignified traditional objectives, in prose, the Guru chose to write in verse because poetry as an art, in the words of Collingwood, is the community's medicine for the worst disease of mankind, the corruption of consciousness. The fact that the Guru wrote to Aurangzeb in verse is corroborated by early writers like Sewa Dass author of "Sakhian Daswen Patshah Kian": -

**Khat ka nam Zafarnamah rakhia,
aur bade bistar ka likhia.....
os khat meh kete fard likhe,
ketian rubaiyan likhian**

Instead of addressing the Emperor in the beginning as usual he opened the letter with invocation to God in twelve verses followed by Dastan (the body of the letter) indirectly hitting

right and left the breaker of solemn promises made on oath simultaneously showing him path of real life.

**Hamun mard baa-yed shawad sukhavar
Na shikm-e digar dar dahaan-e digar [55]**

(Man, is who speaks out what is in his heart) this is what Gandhi felt 300 years later. 'Politics' says he "bereft of religion" is absolute dirt ever to be shunted.'

Further Zafarnamah is not an isolated case of not observing the convention of addressing the Emperor or a royal dignitary in verse all together. There is a letter in verse from Shiva ji addressed to Mirza Raja Jai Singh when he was leading an expedition against the Maratha Chief under royal orders. Moreover Zafarnamah was not a diplomatic correspondence from a ruler asserting his physical victory over the Emperor. It rather speaks of a moral victory with a motive of awakening the slumbering human qualities of Great bigot. According to *Mahan Kosh* it was a loving advice to the Emperor from one who was a torch bearer of love of Mankind. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha adds that the old man was moved by this letter. We have it on the authority of Sardar Diwan Singh Maftoon a celebrated Urdu Journalist that during his stay in Hyderabad (Deccan) he met some old resident of Nanded who revealed that Zafarnamah was received from Bhai Daya Singh attired in dress of a Hazi, by Princess Zebulnissa on behalf of his ailing and exhausted father for his consideration and orders. The old man added that Zebulnissa recited the verses to her father and when she came to the couplet.

**Mannam kushtehnam kahi-aan butt parast
Ki an butt prastand man butt shikast [95]**

meaning that the Guru fought against the hill Chiefs who fell upon him under royal orders were idolators and he (The Guru) himself was monotheist; Aurangzeb was shocked to realize that he had coerced for nothing a great believer in monotheism, one of the fundamentals of Islam also.

Had Zafarnamah been a dramatized version of the original letter of Guru versified by a court poet of his, it would not have

found place in Dasam Granth compiled by Bhai Mani Singh or other early Sikh compilers and editors who could easily distinguish the composition of a court poet from that of the Guru's. This has continued to be preserved all along in Dasam Granth under the caption *Jangnamah* too, in Persian and Gurmukhi scripts, along with Hakayats simply for the reasons that both the compositions were of the Guru vide copy of Dasam Granth compiled in 1822 Bik (1765A.D.) at Jammu now preserved in Toshakhana of Akal Takhat, Amritsar (**Dasam Granth da itihās by Sardar Randhir Singh Research Scholar, S.G.P.C.**) That early compilers and editors of Dasam Granth were so meticulous in discerning and distinguishing the Guru's hand writing and style from that of his copyist or court poets is evident from the words occurring in Akal Ustat: "*utar khase ka*" (meaning the copy of verses written in Guru's own hand, and "*age likhari ke daskhat*" that is here after Guru's verse have been copied from the compilation in the hand of Guru's copyist.

Secondly it is a fact that all the court poets including Bhai Nand Lal and Sainapati were bidden farewell by the master in 1703, when he anticipated an attack from the enemy. Bhai Nand Lal could have versified Zafarnamah only after his meeting the Guru with the request of assisting his then patron Prince Muazzam in war of succession in 1707, with a mention at the end of work as usual, of his pen name Goya which is not found in Zafarnamah in its present form. If at all, Goya or any other poet for that matter had dramatized that letter they would not have taken the undue advantage of doing so in the name of Guru. Surely they would have done it in their own name and their composition would have found place in their own collection of poetry still in existence. Even those writers who doubt that the Guru was the author of *Puranic tales (Awatar Katha)* with Ram and Shayam as per names assert that Zafarnamah was written by the Guru. *Dr Rattan Singh Jaggi is one of them.

[*Dr Rattan Singh Jaggi says that the greatness and magnanimity of the Guru is clearly brought out through this letter (Jangnaamh-Zafarmanah). Says, he that the Guru has unfathomable zeal to bring out his views without inhibition.

He fears none. He is the hero of the masses; has abundant belief in justice and righteousness.-Editor]

Zafarnamah is a master piece of Guru's Persian poetry and its literary excellence has all along been appreciated by scholars and critics. To quote Dr Hira Lal Chopra, M.A. D.Litt; Lecturer in Islamic History and Culture, University of Calcutta, Guru Gobind Singh's knowledge of Persian will be acknowledged by all who read the Zafarnamah because it was desired to attune with martial tone of events that were referred to by the Guru, the Mutqarab metre of the Shahnamah of Firdausi was chosen by the Guru The whole of this poem is full of classical Persian allusion and shows a perfect mastery of history and literature of the Muslims and the Pre- Muslim Persians, whose language the Mughals had adopted for their courts. The mention of the names of Kaikhusrow, Jamshid, Faridun, Bahman, Isfandiyar and Iskandar give us an idea as to how these non Muslim predecessors of the Persians had glorified themselves in theatre of war and upheld the cause of their country against the aggressors. The mention of Sher Shah Suri is more of a political nature as it was he who ousted Aurangzeb's ancestors Humayun, out of India and obliged him to take refuge in Persia where the state religion was Shiaism, of which Aurangzeb was an arch enemy The epistle as a whole is a remarkable piece of enunciation of ethics. It is equally remarkable for its poetry and diction. **(The Sikh Review, Guru Gobind Singh's Third Birth centenary Number—Vol 1, January 1967, page 217-218)**

Yet it is argued by those who don't believe in Zafarnamah to be Guru's work that its literary standard is too low to attribute to the great Guru. The sorry state of affair is the result of defective transcription by later semi-literate from time to time of Zafarnamah from Gurmukhi script in Persian and vice versa. The mistakes committed by Gurmukhi writers were often by Persian writers for substituting wrong words of their own or all together ignoring or leaving out a couplet or two as claimed by Shri Naz, resulting in glaring alteration in the original text pointed by various scholars working on the epic. For example the text adopted by Dr Ganda Singh does not contain the couplets

referring to ancient Persian Kings Kaikhusrow, Isfandiyar etc. Pointing to the defective construction of the following couplets he says that the apparently incorrect word 'Shuman' in the text should be replaced by correct word 'Shuma' which appropriately rhymes with 'Khata' instead of 'Zian' in the text.

**Ke ajb ast ajb ast fatwah-e shuma
Bajuz raasti sukhan guftan zian [68]**

This amply explains how the literary standard of Zafarnamah suffered at the hands of copyist both Gurmukhi and Persian making it look like a forged document.

It is thus, another thing that the original manuscript of Zafarnamah in Guru's hand or scribed by one of his copyist is not available and Cunningham and other writers have more or less, based their version of Zafarnamah on that preserved in Dasam Granth but certainly not Syed Mohd Latif, Bhai Santokh Singh and Sardha Ram. The Muslim historian of Punjab distorted the contents of it to suit his own purpose of representing it as a letter of grievances. It is strange that the author of *Suraj Parkash* did not make use of the epistle contained in the Dasam Granth. He, rather versified the prose version of Parchian Sewa Dass, referred to earlier, which is far from spirit and verbatim rendering in Punjabi of Zafarnamah. Sardha Ram simply copied Parchian version in his *Sikhan- de-Raj-di-Vithia*.

Clues to existence of original or old copies of original Zafarnamah in Persian script have been suggested now and then. Gyani Partap Singh, Ex Jathedar of Akal Takhat says in *Gurmat Lectures* that original copy is said to be in possession of the descendents of manager of Aurangabad Toshakhana at Ahmednagar. Nanak Chand Naz tells us of an old lady of Golra Sharif (West Pakistan) who would go in trance in the course of reading an old book in Persian which Naz identified to be Zafarnamah.

Historical value of Zafarnamah

Speaking at the occasion of centenary celebration of Indian Archeological Department Shri Nehru said that Indian ancient history found expression more in epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata and in mythology and monuments. It had been often

said therefore that Indians were not historically conscious like the Arabs and the Chinese. There was however a wealth of material in India which required codification and interpretation. The Zafarnama is one of such documents. It is one of the two epistles of victory written by Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb in 1705, after the battle of Chamkaur fought on 7th Poh, 1761 (22Dec, 1704)

It throws light on the circumstances in which the Guru resorted to arms and on the conduct of Generals and Viceroys of the Emperor and hill Chiefs. The Guru questions and objects to the manner in which these dignitaries behaved and acquitted themselves in the action. He calls them liars:

**Na katra ma-raa aitbaar-e bar-o-ast
Ki bakshi o deewan hama kizabgo ast (14)**

They threw to winds their words and broke without the least compunction the promises which they made swearing by holy Quran and Cow. This led him to take defensive action.

**Ba lachaargi darmian aamdām
Ba tadbir teer-o kamaan* aamdām (21)**

* Some writers have used 'tufang' in lieu of 'Kamaan'

It narrates the conspicuous part played by forty starving heroes who fought bravely against swarming armies, often lakhs.

**Guresneh chi kar-e kunad chehal nar
Ki dah lak bar aayad bar-o be-khabar (19)**

Anandpur Quitted

It appears from couplets 56 and 57 that during the long siege of Anandpur in 1704, a Qazi was specially deputed by Aurangzeb, at the instance of his besieging Bakhshis and Diwans, to negotiate with the Guru; terms of cease fire and Guru's quitting the fort of Anandpur for sometime as a face saving of imperial forces.

**Ki kazi mara gufteh beroon na um
Agar rasti khud b-yari kadam (56)
Tu-ra gar bu-baayed ba Kaul-e Quran
B-nizd-e shuma ra rasaanam humaan (57)**

The Qazi handed over to the Guru the document written on a page of holy book and signed by the Emperor and assured him that the Emperor honored the sentiments and wishes of Guru; because the Emperor being occupied in Deccan campaign could not see him at this stage and that he wanted Guru to leave Anandpur for sometime after which he could gladly return.

Relying on the words of Aurangzeb the Guru quitted Anandpur at the dead of night intervening 5th and 6th Poh, 1761 Bikrami. The besiegers went back on their words and attacked the Guru and his peaceful men. In the melee which followed on the banks of swollen Sarsa rivulet, the Guru along with his forty Sikhs including his two younger sons were separated from the main column of his followers. In the evening the band of forty*¹ Sikhs whose names are given below reached Chamkaur (the then Distt. Ambala)

Bhais

Sher Singh	Ganda Singh	Jawala Singh,
Prem Singh	Sewa Singh	Ganga Singh
Sango Singh	Tek Singh	Jhanda Singh
Sant Singh	Dayal Singh	Basawa Singh
Karam Singh	Gurdit Singh	Mehtab Singh
Bishan Singh	Rattan Singh	Tirlok Singh
Jaimal Singh	Kirpal Singh	Sujan Singh
Nihal Singh	Sarup Singh,	Punjab Singh
Kharag Singh	Sehaj Singh	Thakar Singh
Charat Singh	Sardul Singh	Narain Singh
Gurdas Singh	Hardas Singh,	Damodar Singh
Bhagwan Singh	Jawahar Singh	Ranjit Singh,
	Gulab Singh	

Mohkam Singh (of Panj Piaras) Himmat Singh (of Panj Piaras)
Sahib Singh (of Punj Piara)

(Source: - Gurmat Gian Bhandar by Gyani Lal Singh)

Battle of Chamkaur

The Guru and his men occupied a big mud house after purchasing it from its owner. They became a garrison and took their positions. Eight men were appointed to protect each of the four walls of the temporary garrison. Bhai Kotha Singh and

Madan Singh, according to Bhai Vir Singh were to act as watchmen at the gate. Man Singh and Alam Singh performed intelligence duties. Bhai Daya Singh, Sant Singh, the Guru and his two sons went upstairs. Soon arrived like bees the allied armies of viceroyalty of Lahore and Sarhind, clad in black uniforms, reinforced by Nawab of Malerkotla and his hill chiefs led by Raja of Bilaspur whom the Guru refers as breakers of promise (*Paima Shikn*). They promptly surrounded the fortress and attacked it furiously.

**Ba rang-e magas see-ah posh aamdand
B-yak bargi dar kharosh aamdand (26)**

While appreciating the minute particulars of opposing armies furnished by the Guru, we must admit that the author of *Zafarmanah* was perfectly right in estimating the strength of these armies at ten lakh and proclaiming that he would make one of followers to brave the onslaughts of one lakh and a quarter opponents. His version is supported by the evidence of one of the mercenary opportunist and free booters who had gathered around there at the beck and call of royal commanders, according to information of Bhai Hira Singh a celebrated Ragi. The Pathan mercenary who joined the Chamkaur expedition against the Guru told that the number of irregular forces being enormous, he was posted at a place which was twelve or fourteen Kos* from the battlefield and he could not get a chance to move further.

(Kalghidar Chamtakar- Part 2, p 98)

Excellent Archery

Bhai Vir Singh gives the names of royal Generals and Commanders as Ghariat khan, Khizar Khan, Nahar Khan, Gulsher Singh and Khwaja Murad (whose real name has been mentioned by Prof Kartar Singh as Khwaja Muhammad). Nahar Khan, son of Khawaja Khizar Khan was the first casualty. He was followed by Ghairat Khan to face and fall before the arrows of the Guru. The coward Khwaja saved his life by concealing himself behind the wall of a house. *Zafarnamah* mentions the valiant fight of Nahar Khan and cowardice of Khawaja in couplets from 29-35. That the battle was perhaps the bloodiest ever fought by the Guru is evident from the couplets 37-40 where

in he says that with the blood of the dying men, the battlefield was turned into a garden of lala (red) flowers and parts of bodies hacked and slewed, looked like bats and balls. He adds color to the description of action by his poetic excellence when he speaks of discharge of arrows and volley of bullets.

Heroism of Forty

In couplet 41 he again pays tribute to his forty heroes who faced bravely the numerable opponents. How long the heroism of forty, he writes, stand in the odd circumstances? 'For their exemplary sense of sacrifice, the Spartans of Thermopylae² would gladly yield the place of honor to the heroes of Chamkaur.' says Prof Kartar Singh.

Ham aakhir chi mardi kunad karzaar

Ki bar chahal tan aayed-ash beshumar (41)

In the words of Bhai Vir Singh three Sikhs Khazan Singh, Dan Singh and Dhyani Singh were the first to drink the cup of martyrdom in the battlefield. They were followed by three beloved *Piara*s Mohkam Singh, Sahib Singh, Himmat Singh and five *Muktas* Ishar Singh, Deva Singh etc., then came the turn of Mehar Singh, Kirat Singh, Anand Singh, Amolak Singh, Lal Singh, and Kesra Singh. Sahibzada Ajit Singh was accompanied in the volley of death by five men Alam Singh, Jawahar Singh, Alim Singh, Dhayan Singh, Jogiraj Singh, Sukha Singh Gunner and Bir Singh swordsman. Similarly another five escorted Prince Jujhar Singh Ji. When all these crusaders embraced death, the day came to close. In the words of the Guru, the lamp of the day put on its veil and the King of night appeared on the scene with all its glory:

Chirag-e jahaan chun shud-eh burkahposh

Shah-e Shab baraamad hameh jalwa josh [42]]

Panth installed as Guru

Chamkaur Sahib is famous for some outstanding events important enough to give this temple of sacrifice a place of unique distinction in history. The Sikh gentleman who had the Gurudwara built first, often prayed and sought the blessings of the Guru that he might die issue less, so that there might be no

offspring of his to boast of his father's service to the panth or to make any sort of claim on the Gurudwara.

Secondly the dead bodies of the martyrs of Chamkaur were consigned to the fire in very critical circumstances. In the night following the close of hostilities, a young daring Sikh lady Harsharn Kaur clad in Muslim dress tried to cremate the dead bodies of Sikhs. When the fire was lit, some of the Muslim soldiers apprehended and threw her on the burning pyre and corpses were left charred. The cremation was finally performed sometime later by the Bhai Ram Singh and Tirlok Singh forefathers of Maharaja Patiala.

The third event which in sequence of chronology leads the above mentioned two, is the first Gurmata held by the five Sikhs when they saw the Guru bent upon to obtain the crown of martyrdom in the battle of Chamkaur itself. They implored him to leave the battle field as a tactic, because in their opinion his life was more precious and he had yet to guide further the Khalsa which was still in its infancy. Failing this, they in a body assuming the superiority over him as Guru Khalsa ordered him to quit the fortress, which the Guru had to obey. He placed his plume and weapons and bowed low before them, thrice going around them declaring 'I am omni-present amidst five Sikhs'

Panchan main nīt bartat main haun

Panch milen so piran pir

A Strange prayer?

Hind Ka Pir

The Guru then came out of the fortress accompanied by two *Piaras* namely Daya Singh and Dharam Singh and Bhai Man Singh leaving behind there; Sant Singh, Sangat Singh, Ram Singh, Kehar Singh, Santokh Singh and Dewa Singh to fight to the last and Jiwan Singh and Kala Singh to play intensely the drums to indicate his departure thereby creating confusion in the ranks of the enemy who were taking rest. The Guru clasped his palms and thundered alone thrice "**Lo, Here goes the Pir of Hind**". 'The men from the enemy camp rushed out helter skelter. But the Guru escaped to Machiwara unhurt. He alluded

to this in couplet 44 saying, "The killer of enemies himself brought me out of the fortress without the least harm."

Na pecheed mu-ye na ranjeed tan

Ki beroon khud aawurd dushman shikan [44]

This, in his opinion was due to his relying on the promise made by the Emperor swearing by Quran. One who so trusts others, is guided by through thick and thin.

Har aan kas ki eemaan prasti kunad

Na peimaan khudash pesh-o pasti kunad [47]

What a comparison of actions with the character of a man (Aurangzeb) who never trusted any body in life.

Wazir Khan of Sarhind

Though no direct reference has been made in the Zafarnamah to the atrocities committed by the Viceroy of Sarhind yet it can be inferred from the couplet 80, that the hasty step condemned therein as Stan's action of Wazir Khan of bricking alive the two innocent sons of Guru despite the loud pretexts of the Chief of Malerkotla who also represented to the Emperor. Thus wrote Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan to Aurangzeb in a long letter.

"O mighty King of the world, who in age of justice has placed thy throne on the azure vault, may the dappled horse of the skies be ever under thy control, because thou hast eclipsed the brilliance of the Sun and the Moon by the splendor of innumerable victories.

'The humble and devoted petitioner with all respect due to the grandeur of the shadow of God and the might of the savior of the world, most respectfully begs to lay his humble appeal before your most Gracious Majesty and hopes from your Imperial Majesty's unfathomable kindness and unlimited magnanimity that the august person of the shadow of the God, vice-regent of the holy prophet (peace be on him) in this world, and the incarnation of God's mercy over his creatures by sheer munificence, be placed to bestow his compassion and forgiveness on the young sons of Guru Gobind Singh, tenth Guru of the Sikh nation.'

'The viceroy of Sarhind province with a view to avenging the disobedience and disloyalty of the Guru which may have been

committed by him, has without any fault or crime of the guiltiness of innocent children simply on the basis of being the sons of Gobind Singh condemned those minor sons liable to execution, and has proposed to wall them alive till they die. Although no one dares to raise any objection against the orders of the viceroy whose order is as inevitable as death, yet the faithful servant and well wisher of this august Majesty Empire deems it most advisable to humbly appeal to bring this to your Majesty's benign notice. May it be said that in view of certain political considerations your Majesty is deposed to inflict suitable punishment on the Sikh nation for their undesirable activities in the past. It would be quite compatible with justice, but your Majesty's humble and devoted servant thinks that it would be in no way consistent with the principles of sovereignty and supreme power to wreck vengeance of the misdeeds of a whole nation on two innocent children who on account of their tender age are quite innocent and unable to take a stand against the all powerful viceroy. This sort of action obviously appears to be absolutely against the dictates of Islam and the laws pronounced by the founder of Islam (May God's Blessing be showered on him) and your Majesty's humble servant is afraid that the enactment of such an atrocious act would perpetually remain an ugly blot on the face of your Majesty's renowned justice and righteousness. It may graciously be considered that the mode of inflicting punishment and tortures contemplated by the viceroy of Sarhind can by no means be considered compatible with the principles of supreme rule and equity of justice.'

'In view of the above consideration your Majesty's humble and devoted servant most respectfully takes the liberty of suggesting that if your Majesty considers it expedient that the sons of Gobind Singh may be kept under restraint from indulging in disloyal activities, it would be more appropriate if they could be interned in royal capital Delhi, till they are duly reformed so as to willingly acknowledge allegiance and loyalty to the throne. As an alternative both the boys may be placed under my care so as to keep a check on their actions and movements and not allow them to entertain any kind of ideas of sedition or disloyalty in their minds. Although the humble petitioner fears that the humble

appeal which is prompted exclusively by the sense of veracity and loyalty to the throne may be deemed as transgressing the limits of propriety yet the fear of God and the urge of truth does not allow undue suppression of truth. If this humble petition has the honor of meeting the Royal acceptance it shall be most fortunate. If, however deprived of the honor of acceptance still your humble Majesty's humble and devoted servant shall have the consolation of having performed the sacred duty of expressing what was right and just, and not having allowed his pen to deviate in the expression of truth.'

While suggesting the detention of the princes at the royal court the petitioner probably had in mind the cases of Baba Ram Rai and Sambha Ji son of Shiva Ji.

Keeping in view the enormity of the atrocities committed by Wazir Khan, as brought out by the Guru and Sher Muhammad in their letters we can understand Wazir Khan's becoming enemy number one of, the Guru. So much so that the Guru's glorious career was cut short by assassin knife. The culprits were hired by the Viceroy of Sarhind.

Truth verses falsehood

Even a cursory glance over the Zafarnamah will show that the Guru laid emphasis here and there on the truthfulness and morality. He boldly admonished the Emperor for not keeping his words. In his first epistle (Fatehnamah) the Guru had plainly told the Emperor that his name Aurangzeb (Adorner of throne) was not befitting as it was not compatible with his actions betraying deceit and cunningness.

Na zeebad tura naam Aurangzeb

Ki Aaurang zeeban na yaabad fareb [5] Fatehnamah

In Zafarnamah too he declared that the man he who keeps his word is truthful & moral.

Hamun mard baa-yad shawad sukhavar

Na shikm-e digar dar dahaan-e digar [55]

The boldness and clarity of mind of the author reflects in the lucidity of and logic behind the ideas expressed. He has rightly expressed the character of the Emperor in describing him as a cunning fox (robah-pech) and exposing his hypocrisy saying that

neither he fears God , nor he has faith in the prophet (vide verse 46)

**Na eeman prasti na auzaa-e deen
Na Sahib shanaasi Mohammed* yakeen [46]**

*Some writers' have used 'Muhakam' in lieu of 'Muhammad'

Hill Chiefs

In verse 95: he points out fallacy of Emperor's claim to his being defender of faith.

**Mannam kushtnum kohi-aan butt prast
Ki an butt prastand man butt shikast [95]**

The Guru says that Aurangjeb, who pretends to believe in one God and hates idolatry, has made alliance against him (the Guru) with hill chiefs who are idolators and mischief mongers (purfitn). These hill chiefs were twenty two in number and their states, situated on various ranges of mountains were known as follows:

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Jaswan | 2.Siba | 3. Chamba |
| 4. Nurpur | 5.Datarpur | 6. Guler |
| 7. Kullu | 8.Suket | 9. Kotlehar |
| 10. Mandi | 11.Bijharwal | 12. Bhaddu |
| 13. Mankot | 14.Basohli | 15. Samba |
| 16. Jammu | 17.Chenani | 18. Kishtwar |
| 19. Jasrota | 20.Bhadarwah | 21. Kangra |
| | 22. Kehlur (Bilaspur) | |

The Guru invited them to join him in his crusade against the forces of evil. Their false prestige and superiority complex stood in their way. Rather they acted as renegades and joined hands with the Emperor in opposing the Guru and Sikh movement. But it is an irony of fate that these Rajas had to seek the assistance of the Guru one day, when the imperial forces came to chastise them for non payment of tribute. The Guru saved them by fighting in their favor in the battle of Nadaun.

Suspicious and Selfish Moghul

Suspicious and selfish as Aurangzeb was, he never trusted and relied upon his deputies or ministers. To quote Elphinstone, he alone conducted every branch of his Government in the minutest detail. He planned campaigns and issued instructions during their progress; drawings of forts were sent to him for fixing on points of attack; his letters embraced measures for keeping open the roads in Afghan country, for quelling disturbances at Multan and Agra.

He betrayed his brother Murad by falsely promising with him that he wanted him to succeed Shajahan in preference to Dara and that he intended to go to Mecca. But actually he got him imprisoned and murdered in the fort of Gawalior to become himself alone the master of kingdom of his father. Similarly he implicated the King of Golconda in his snare of religious hypocrisy. When he was actually going to invade King's territory, he falsely proclaimed that he was going to visit the holy shrine at Gulbarga. The King sent Rupees five Lakhs for distribution to the beggars and needy at Shrines also as a token of allegiance to the Emperor. Aurangzeb confiscated the money and attacked Golconda.

Rebukes and Reproaches

No body dared to come near him as he did not take any body into confidence. This was why Aurangzeb remained friendless. Guru was not alone to criticize the actions and deeds of Emperor. Shah of Persia rebuked him for his assuming the title of Alamgir and Sheriff of Mecca refused to accept money offered by him in the coins minted in his name. His own son Mohd. Akbar, who rebelled against him and fled Persia, when asked by him to come back, wrote him a highly objectionable letter saying. "My youth" and your avenging spirit stand in my way to come to you. 'Sivaji wrote to him that perhaps Jazia was levied upon Hindus to replenish the state revenue which had been exhausted in fighting against him (Sivaji). If Aurangzeb had faith in God and the holy book, he should know that in Quran God had been mentioned as Rabb-ul-alamin (God of worlds) and not as Rabbul-Muslmin (God of Musalmin).....He was simply astonished to learn that why Imperial forces kept the Emperor in dark. They tried to

keep concealed the flames of fire under the stacks of hay. These sentiments are somewhat similar to those of Guru Gobind Singh who warned the Emperor against his sitting over a volcano saying that it is no chivalry to put out some sparks when he was himself adding fuel to the fire.

**Chi mardi ki akhgar khamoshan kuni
Ki atash dama-ra badauran kuni (79)**

But the tone of former betrays of slandering the Emperor whereas the main object of the Guru in addressing Aurangzeb was to arouse his slumbering soul and awake the human in him. That is why the tone of concluding portion of Zafarnamah is conciliatory and little humorous too at a place. The Guru tells him that Berars of Kangars owe allegiance to him (the Guru) and he may come over there fearlessly for negotiation and he will be treated kindly (verse 59, 60). In other words that the tract of land had got a sort of independence. The Guru says that if he wanted to regain that territory Aurangzeb should give a horse worth a thousand rupees as tribute vide Couplet 61.

**Yak-e asb shayesteh yak hazaar
Bi-aa ta bagiri ba man een dayaar³ [61]**

In the end Guru advises him to do justice and honor his promises (verse 69). He should not shed blood of innocent, because someday heavenly sword might befall upon his head too.

**Mazan teg bar khoon-e kas be-dareg
Tura neez khoon ast ba charkh teg [69]**

Object Achieved

The object of Guru was achieved. The Emperor realized his mistake, admitted his misdeeds and repented. He ordered his viceroys not to harass the Guru further. He deputed two men to bring the Guru in his presence with due honor. The change of heart of great Bigot is evident from one of his letters written in his last days to Kambaksh, his youngest son from his death bed.

“My most affectionate son, the light of my eyes and the comfort of my heart. I write to you at a time when I am

departing from this world. My first and foremost thought is about you, whose helpless condition excites my pity. But what can I do? Whatever good or bad I have done, I am taking it as a load upon my head to the great unseen. How strange it is to contemplate that I came to this earth all alone, but now I am leaving with a caravan of my doings. Excepting God who knows no fall I do not see any one else. My heart is anguished by the thought of armies and military resources which I am leaving. But it is more bitterly torn by the pain of death which is around the corner.

I am totally in dark about the destiny that awaits me. What I know is that I have committed enormous sins. Cannot tell what grim punishment is in store for mePeace be with you."

Without fear of contradiction it can be averred that Aurangjeb died as a God fearing man. This was the miracle of the pen of the great Guru, the savior of souls; who knows no retaliation. Aurangjeb got murdered four sons of Guru Gobind Singh who helped the son of former to get the throne and crown of India. He knew how to mould the hearts. He made the saint of a soldier and turned a Bairagi into a soldier. Zafarnamah was penned by such a great soul and it should be interpreted keeping all these things in view.

Such is the vast treasure of knowledge enshrined in Dasam Granth, the work of the father of Khalsa. Surely any one whosoever, cares to peep into this spiritual and secular treasure will be blessed with bliss and wisdom. The Guru says:

**Piu dade Ka Khol ditha Khazana
Tan mere man bhai nidhana.**

Editor Adds*: - Prof Surjit Singh Gandhi gives the list of forty Singh's in the 'History of Sikh Guru's Retold' vide Appendix ii', which reads as under:

In the battle of Chamkaur, Guru Gobind Singh had only forty Sikhs with him. All of them with the exception of Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Mann Singh died martyrs in the battlefield. No single source gives the names of these thirty seven martyrs. But on the basis of information gleaned from various Granths the following list of martyrs has been prepared.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kirpa Singh | 2. Anak Singh | 3. Sanmukh Singh |
| 4. Ajab Singh | 5. Ajaib Singh | 6. Alim Singh |
| 7. Dan Singh | 8. Tula Singh | 9. Mula Singh |
| 10. Jawand Singh | 11. Bakshish Singh | 12. Bakshish Singh |
| 13. Sher Singh | 14. Nahar Singh | 15. Hukam Singh |
| 16. Mohkam Singh | 17. Sahib Singh | 18. Himmat Singh |
| 19. Deva Singh | 20. Ram Singh | 21. Tehal Singh |
| 22. Ishar Singh | 23. Fateh Singh | 24. Dhian Singh |
| 25. Dhanna Singh | 26. Siam Singh | 27. Mohar Singh |
| 28. Bir Singh | 29. Sukha Singh | 30. Sant Singh |
| 31. Kotha Singh (Majhabi) | 32. Madan Singh (Ravi-Dasia) | |
| 33. Kirat Singh | 34. Anand Singh | 35. Lal Singh |
| 36. Kesar Singh | 37. Amolak Singh | 38. Jawahar Singh |
| 39. Sangat Singh. | | |

Learned author further states that there seems to be duplication at Srl no 4&5 and 11 & 12. He has given the family details of the martyrs from 1-12. And the scene has been described in a beautiful and slander way by tenth Master in the following couplet. 'How long these forty brave men could face the assault of the huge army.'

**Ham akhir chi mardi kunad karzar
Ki bar chahal tan aayedash beshumar [41]**

Note: This is a compilation of four essays:

1. 'A note on Dasam Granth': Guru Gobind Singh number, 1960. The 'Spokesman' weekly.
2. 'Historical value of Zafarnamah'; Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1962, The 'Spokesman' Weekly.
3. 'Bachittar Natak at a glance'; Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1963, The 'Spokesman' weekly.
4. 'Zafarmnamah: Some Doubts and Misunderstanding'; Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1968. The 'Spokesman' weekly and Sikh Review.

Footnotes

1. There is a slight variation in the names of forty Singh's who attained martyrdom at Chamkaur Sahib. List given on page 238 of Zafarnamah steek by Sant Kirpal Singh

(Publisher: Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh and Co) gives the names of forty Sikhs with the addition of Bhai Man Singh, Alam Singh and Sangat Singh. -Editor

2. Battle of Thermopylae focuses on the heroic deeds of Greeks who fought against all odds against an invading Persian army, superior in arms and numbers. In this battle 300 Spartans (from Sparta-a powerful city in Greece, where people were not interested in comfort or luxury; Spartans) held a strong Persian army for three days at the pass of Thermopylae. The alliance was led by King Leonids to block the passage. The alliance force of 300 Spartans held back the invading army numbering more than one Lac. It is said that King was joined by 700 volunteers as well. Some say actual number was 4300. It is indeed a fact that westerners over-glorify their Heros. The Saptans of Thermopylae shall pale into insignificance in the face of heroism of 40 Singh's of Chamkaur, who fought against ten lac strong Mughal army of Emperor Aurangzeb. -Editor
3. On the other hand Dr Rattan Singh Jaggi translates this verse as: Aurangzeb! You have written to me, to bring one expensive horse worth one thousand and that in return I can take this territory of Ananadpur. Some translations have totally different meanings of this verse. According to some 'Guru Ji asked Aurangzeb to bring one thousand horses to him in Dina and in return could get that area from Guru Ji', and the translation of Sr. Navtej Sarna is in line with that given by the Author:
"Present me perhaps a fine horse, that is valued at a thousand, I may grant you if you seek, in bounty this tract of land"

War Policy and Military Genius of Guru Gobind Singh

The present has its roots in the past because the current events are influenced by the tradition of a nation; which are based on past events. The martyrdom of the valiant fighters like Kewal Singh, Joginder Singh and others who laid down their lives defending the borders of their country is linked with the traditional actions of valor of our ancestors, who preferred death to slavery, and 'died for ashes of their fathers and temples of their Gods.' The Sikh Guru's have played a glorious part in shaping the destiny of their mother land and building up military tradition by infusing in the heart of people the spirit of fighting the tyrants. Says, Guru Gobind Singh the Godfather of Khalsa. 'May I fall fighting in the battle field facing bravest odds'. He warns his country men that 'without giving a tough fight to the aggressor, they cannot recapture the territory lost to the former':

Judh kiye bin pher phirai

Nah bhoom sabhi abhni awidhari

(Chandi Charit-ukat Bilas)

Sacrament of Steel

Guru Gobind Singh was a peace loving revolutionary; he was a torch-bearer of equality, fraternity and liberty of men. The way of realization of God in his opinion was the love of fellow beings. He shunned war and loved peace. Sword was his last resort, only when war was thrust upon him. Yet he was alive to the need of war and contributed to the belief that preparation for war was necessary for preservation of peace, so that one might not be caught napping.

His efficient soldiery has ever been envied and historians have spoken highly of discipline and morale of his saint soldiers. To quote Sir J.N.Sarkar, 'If Cromwell's Ironsides could have been inspired with the Jesuits unquestioning acceptance of their

superior decision or moral and spiritual questions the result would have equaled Guru Gobind Singh's Sikhs as a fighting machine.' This is a glowing tribute to Guru being a unique Saint statesman and General. His ability to plan strategy, and his capacity to lead, command and control was par excellence. He took great pains to train his men in modern warfare and he had to wait long but patiently for the cherished goal, as observed by Malcolm. 'It was not possible that he could create means in a few days to oppose with success the forces of one of the greatest empires of the universe'. Though the sword was introduced in the Sikhism by Guru Hargobind and had since come to stay, yet under Guru Gobind Singh its importance and influence increased as much as it became one of the five symbols of Khalsa and a must for the Sikhs as the sacred thread for the Hindus.

With the baptism of two edged sword, steel entered into the souls of the Sikhs and Almighty God became to be known as 'All Steel'. In the words of Edmund Candler, when Guru Gobind Singh inaugurated the sacrament of steel he proved himself a wise and farsighted leader. For of all material things which genius has inspired with spiritual significance, steel is the truest and uncompromising. Let humanitarians prate as they will, there never has been a race who have not been purged and refined by it. In some it is the only combater of grossness and the monster of self. To the Khalsa it gave a cause and welded them into a nation in the dark days of Muhamedan rule when the Sikh was slain at sight and no quarter was given to him. It drove them on gallant crusade in which they rode to Amritsar in dead of night and galloped back through the enemy lines, purified. Hundreds were slain but not one abjured his faith or perjured his soul to preserve his muddy vesture of decay. **[Mantel of the East]**

He was wide awake to the crafty & treacherous tactics deployed by the Mughals & hill chiefs. He wanted a new and moral method for his Sikhs, whose aim in life was to make the sparrow hunt & pluck up the falcon. He proved to be an able General and an efficient statesman and brought about a revolution in society with Khalsa panth. His followers from low strata of society became his fighting force. He proved to be an efficient fighter, a fine statesman, poet and an equally kind and benevolent

Guru, who could go and soothe his dying Sikhs and free them from the pangs of resignation tendered by them. He and his Sikhs knew that it was a social war for survival of their prestige, honour & self respect & they were prepared for it.

Moral versus brutalisation

Guru Gobind Singh was deadly against winning war by foul means and he did not approve of the proverb that every thing was fair in love and war. Edmund Candler while comparing the Rajput and Sikhs says that Sikh has more backbone, because he is of the soil, he broods and he is a slow fuse and a defender. The whole of Zafarnama revolves round the axis of couplet: **'He is the man who has on his lips the word that is in his thought.'** The history of his battles with imperial forces can be summed up in his couplet, **'I do not believe your swearing by the Holy Quran. There was no alternative but to my unsheathing the sword'** He therefore asked his soldiers, who were saintly by disposition, not to strike below the belt and not to commit any of the crimes of war generally committed by victors. It is narrated that in the war of Nadaun, the wife of Mughal Sardar fell into the hands of Sikhs who brought her to the Guru. The very first question put to her by Guru was if any of his Sikhs had shown disrespect to her. He was pleased to know that every courtesy was shown to her, and he ordered that the lady be sent to her husband where he was.

Modern Weapons

According to Vartak Mehma Parkash the Guru was overjoyed to see arms. He almost worshipped them. One who presented him arms could easily win his favors more easily than one who simply offered money. Accordingly Raja Rattan Rai of Assam presented to him:

1. Five horses with Gold trappings.
2. Throne (a Chouki) which was so contrived that puppets appeared from within it on pressing a button and played chess. (Chaper)
3. A multipurpose weapon (Panch-kala-Shastar) which could be used as a revolver, a sword, a lance, a dagger and a club.

4. A beautiful cup.
5. A well trained elephant called 'Parsadi'.

In some of his *Hukamnamas* he called upon his Sikhs to supply him good bullocks', horses and elephants which might prove useful in war. In one of such letters addressed in Samvat 1758 (1701A.D.) to the Sikhs of Dacca, he asked them to send him a war elephant.

He equipped his soldiers with modern weapons including fire arms. In the battle of Bhangani were used the wooden canons manufactured by Bhai Rama. Metal guns were also cast, two of which were preserved in Lahore Museum. Two big guns named as Bijai-ghosh (Proclamation of victory) and Baghan (Tigress) were mounted on the ramparts of Anandpur in the siege of the town. The Guru gave his soldiers the war drum (Ranjit Nagara), the yellow banner and battle cry, 'Sat Sri Akal'. The Ranjit Nagara and Nishan Sahib were installed in the year 1688. '*Nand Chand ko hukam bkhana, Kije tyar nishan mahana*' (Guru Parkash Suraj). The soldiers were imparted sound training, maneouvers and mock fights being held during the period from Basant Panchmi to Hola Mohalla. In the initial stages his men shot clouds of earth at one another in mock fights. Riding, fencing and tent pegging were sedulously practiced. They made attacks at sham and real fort at Anandpur; at times at high mounds of earth specially put up as an effigy of Aurangzeb with shouting "Kill the tyrant Turk Auranga". Guru Parkash Suraj (458) says thus:

Shashtar gahen abhiyas kamaven
Tir tupak talwar chalaven
Sab jattan ke banhe sipahe
Vasey bir ras bahu ur mahee
Fauj Guru ke sung hazare
Keh jaikara dars nihare (Guru Partap Suraj)

Methods of Warfare

The Sikhs used both offensive and defensive weapons in their battles. Among the first may be included bows and arrows, two edged daggers, spears, swords lances, *teghas* (cutlasses) spikes,

muskets and guns. The shield prepared from hide was their main weapon of defense. They mainly fought from horse back, the method of warfare mainly consisted in opposing armies engaging at close quarter; combat exercises were frequent to meet the challenge of individuals. This indeed, was the most attractive form of fight, as being the one which allowed personal heroism to come out glaringly. The examples in this context can be multiplied from the Sikh history. Bhai Bachittar Singh with a spear faced the intoxicated elephant in a battle of Anandpur. Bhai Mohkam Singh was in the forefront in this battle. The elephant turned back and Bhai Mohkam Singh cut off his trunk and another sikh cut off one rear leg and elephant was killed. The heroic fight in the battle of Chamkaur given by the two brave sons of the Guru and his Sikhs has no parallel in the history of warfare.

Service record

All enlistment to Army was voluntary. Some of the Sikhs even did not accept any salaries, but generally they were paid either daily or six monthly allowances. It appears from Guru Shobha (p-48) and Suraj Parkash (p-547) that some sort of registration of the names of recruits was done and their descriptive roles were maintained. **(Battles of Guru Gobind Singh, by Surinder Singh, M.A. (P 69-70).**

They were honored and rewarded from time to time with cash and merit certificates, as was done at the end of battle of Bhangani. Ranks like *Panj-hazari*, *Das-hazari* were given on the pattern of Mughal Army.

Discipline

Thus he did every thing to keep up the moral and morale of his troops. But he was on the other hand a rigid disciplinarian and stiff task master. He would not tolerate renegades feelers of enemy or fifth columnists amongst his soldiers. During the last siege of Anandpur, when some Sikhs displayed disloyalty, he allowed them to go on their duly resigning by signing the renunciation deed. This he did to save others from being effected. The Guru had to engage in war, no doubt, yet it was not for lack of love and regard for human life. Says Prof. Kartar

Singh; he never shot at such of enemy's soldiers as were not at the time, actually engaged in fight.

Fortification

The forts and fortresses in those days played a pivotal role as a defensive measure. He raised a fortress at Paonta. At Chamkaur a big house of a landlord was turned into a fortress. Anandpur had such fortresses known as Keshgarh, Holgarh, Lohgarh, Tarargarh, Anandgarh and Ajitgarh. These were adequately garrisoned and commanded by able and experienced Generals. During the last siege of Anandpur (1704 A.D) a contingent of five hundred men was placed in Anandpur under Prince Ajit Singh; Sher Singh and Nahar Singh were entrusted with the defense of Lohgarh. The third division under Alim Singh and Ude Singh was to look after Agampur area. Mohkam Singh with four hundred Sikhs took charge of Holgarh; the rest of army being kept by Guru in Anandgarh.

War Tactics

The Guru successfully employed all war tactics then in vogue. He made use of intelligence service headed by Alim Singh. His soldiers, during the siege of Anandpur planned night attacks under the command of Sher Singh, Nahar Singh and sallied forth from the fort and fell on the enemy unawares. When their supplies ran short, the Sikhs resorted to desultory sallies to seize supplies from their enemies. According to Sainapati, provisions became so dear as to sell at one seer a rupee and they could not be had even at that cost. If four Sikhs went forth to bring water for them, two of them died fighting, the remaining two only succeeded in bringing some of it for their needs (Guru Shobha p.69). On the same authority we have that before leaving Anandpur the Guru distributed his treasure to his soldiers and set fire to all that was valuable in the fort and could not be carried along, so that the valuables might not fall into the hands of his enemy.

The Guru was prepared to patch up honorably with the enemy to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. The second battle of Anandpur ended in his marching out of Anandpur to Nirmoh. The strategy in which Rajputs of Rajasthan lacked was

appreciated by Aurangzeb. In his will he recommended it to his heirs and slandered Rajputs for their false prestige standing in their way of pursuing this policy.

Often he left the initiative to his lieutenants who displayed a remarkable sense of responsibility and presence of mind. Bhai Sant Singh (Sangat Singh) duped the Mughal forces in the battle of Chamkaur by putting on the plume and arms of Guru in order to be taken himself as the Guru. In the battle of Mukatsar the Sikhs in order to give an exaggerated idea of their numbers threw their *chaddars/ sheets* on the surrounding bushes and gave them the shape of tents. In the night they often shouted Sat Sri Akal so as to impress upon the enemy that enforcements were coming to them.

Hospitalisation

Bhai Kanhiya after whose name the Sikh sect of Sewa Panthis was formed used to serve water to the thirsty and rendered first aid to the wounded soldiers both of the Guru and that of enemy. He was thus the first to organize service which is now known as Red Cross Society and John Ambulance. The Guru had a regular hospital where wounded were treated. The bark of Sal tree was used for dressing wounds by the Sikh Physicians trained by Hakim Shah Sikandar of Guram. Some of his (Guru) shortsighted Sikhs accused Bhai Kanhaiya of helping the enemies by giving water to their wounded soldiers, but the Guru approved of his action and encouraged him to preserve in that noble path of love and of all without distinction, says Prof. Kartar Singh.

Above all there was the great and gracious personality of the gracious Guru who guided his soldiers and led them on expeditions. The Sikhs were, in words of Bhai Santokh Singh, delighted at the prospect of the battle and congratulated themselves on their good fortune in being allowed to fight for the Guru and faith. Several of them put on saffron colored clothes in token of rejoicing and said, 'We have only four days to live in this world. Why should we not obtain the exalted dignity of martyrdom, which will ensure salvation? The Sikhs had their heart in the cause for which they had taken up the sword and every one thought it his own duty to do his little bit towards the

end. According to one of their codes of conduct (Rehat Nama) he is the Khalsa who rides a horse, he is the Khalsa who gives battle (to the tyrant).

The Sikh soldiers were not mercenaries like their opponents. Surely the allurements of Gold could not have built a nation of saint soldiers.

Not gold but only man can make,
A people great and strong:
Men who for truth and honor's sake,
Stand fast and suffer long.
Brave men who work while others sleep,
Who dare while others flee?
They build nation's pillars deep.

Dead drunk with the spirit that their Guru infused into them, the Sikh soldiers have done wonders. Deeply impressed by their bravery and patriotism, General Barker thus observed in his letter dated 19 Aug, 1771 to Sardar Jhanda Singh Bhangu, 'It is clear that as long as the Khalisah Army is in the watch, no one can march upon Hindustan unopposed.' Hitler was once reported as saying that he was afraid of no army in the world except the Sikh soldiers. The spirit has been displayed by them recently defending the border of their Motherland against the Chinese onslaught. Duty bound as they are, they will fight to their last drop of blood to rout the enemy completely as their forefathers did to brave the tyranny of the great Bigot, Aurangzeb under the able guidance of the great Guru, the symbol of truth and tolerance. Like wise the truth is with us and we will win 'Satyamev Jayte'.

The "SPOKESMAN" Weekly, Baisakhi Number, 1963

Guru Gobind Singh ji's visit to Rawalsar

Many places in Himachal Pradesh are proud of having been visited by Guru Gobind Singh: the period beginning with his coming from his birth place, Patna, to Makhowal; then a small village in Kehlur (Bilaspur State) situated on the bank of Sutlej river in the territory (then known as Madar Desh and now called as Himachal Pradesh) and his bidding fare well to that place (Anandpur) in 1704. At the invitation of Raja of Nahan, he went there to make peace with that Raja and ruler of Srinagar (Garhwal). He stayed there for about four years at Paonta (Sahib), situated on the bank of Yamuna, and fought his first battle at Bhangani. He visited Bhaboor, Basali and Kapal Mochan to infuse the spirit of freedom in the downtrodden and gave battle to Mughal forces at Nadaun.

It was in 1702 that he went to Rawalsar, a sacred place of Buddhist and Hindus where a big fair is held on Baisakhi. Pilgrims came from far and wide to witness the fair. According to Suraj Parkash, Rawalsar was named after Rewal, son of Rewa of Naga dynasty. After performing deep meditations and penance, he was blessed by Brahma with Kingship. Rewal founded a Kingdom with his capital at Mandap, now known as Mandi, and his place of meditation was named as Rawalsar. He was defeated and subdued by Yakshas (Guru Partap Suraj Granth, Rut 5). Like floating fields in Dal Lake of Srinagar (Kashmir), in this lake too float small islands consisting of wooden rafts on which grow wild shrubs and small trees.

[Sir Lepel Henry Griffin while writing 'Rajas of Punjab-1870' says that Lake is 6000 ft above sea level. He further says that it is celebrated for its floating isands and a sacred place of pilgrimage. To the Budhists of Tibet, Rewalsar is especially sacred. They resort to it in great number during cold season, generally under the guidance of a Lama. They approach the Lake from a comnsiderable distance on their hands and knees, and it is

considered a meritorious action to carve their names on the surrounding rocks, which are thus covered with inscription, some of them is exceedingly curious.]

In 1702, for some political reasons, Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, whom the Guru had helped in 1690 against Alif Khan, an officer of Aurangzeb and who had turned hostile to Guru thereafter, wanted to patch up his differences with the Guru, and sent his Vazir Parmanand alias Pamma to Anandpur to initiate negotiations in this connection. The Vazir persuaded the Guru to go to Rawalsar on the occasion of Baisakhi when the entire hill Chiefs would assemble there.

The Guru started with his family on a journey of 70 miles in the last week of March. His first halt was at Kiratpur, from where passing through villages of Bagheri, Rataipur and Kuriali, reached Kala Khundhk situated on Rupar-Bilaspur road. He encamped under a big Pipal tree on the bank of lake which does not exist now. Marching from there, he reached Bilaspur and camped outside the city in a jungle near the river Sutlej. Raja Bhim Chand received the Guru with due honor and apologized for his past conduct and requested him to stay in his palace. The Guru replied: "Well for me this place is also a palace and a day will come when there will actually be a palace." The prophecy came out true and Raja Nand Chand built his palace at that spot. Inside the palace a mound marked the palce where the Guru stayed.

At the time of departure of the Guru, the Raja sent his Ministers to escort him up to the boundary of his state. Passing through Kadoor, the Guru reached and stayed at Suket as guest of Raja Jit Sen. From there, he arrived at Rawalsar and encamped on the eastern side of the lake. Rajas of various states namely Chamba, Srinagar (Garhwal), Nadaun, Mandi, Kamgarh (Ghamand Chand), Kehlur (BhimChand), Handur (Bhup Chand), Jaspal (Bir Singh), Rampur Bushehar, Kulu Kaithal etc. came to pay their homage to the Guru and offered costly presents. These included arms; one of these, a match lock offered by a Rajput of Farrukhabad, is preserved at Padal (Mandi).

They listened to the sermon of the Guru, both spiritual and political. He advised them to forge a united front against the tyrant Mughal Emperor. The Hill Chiefs were impressed with sincerity and spirit of sacrifice of the Guru for the cause of his oppressed country men. They repented and regretted their past acts of treachery towards him and implored him again to own their cause; forgetting and forgiving what they had done so far. The Guru gave them his blessings and bestowed upon them robes of honor.

Then came to see the Guru; the wives and other female relatives of the Chiefs and with them came, Padma; a beautiful princess of Chamba who herself being an artist and poet appreciated very much Guru's poetry full of nine *rasas* and also his divine powers. On her saluting the Guru, he patted her back with a bow to show, according to Bhai Vir Singh, that the bow from which issue fatal arrows in the battlefield could shower life giving blessings too. (Suraj Parkash, Editor's note-page5423)

In the words of S. Randhir Singh, Research scholar , author of 'Sikh Itihas de Partakh Darshan', in Rawalsar the Guru made consultations, on the occasion of Baisakhi of 1748 Bik (29th March,1691), with Jakh Raj and Bhujang Sardar and planned the future programme of warfare.

This is probably based on the somewhat different version couched in Puranic language of Kavi Santokh Singh who, falling in line with Sau-Sakhi, presents the Guru as making the two tribal Chiefs- Rawal, the head of Nag tribe and Sard Dhar, representative of Kuber of Alkapuri, Raja of Yaskshas who deprived the former of his kingdom to reconcile. Commenting on it Bhai Vir Singh says: "It can be conjectured that apparently the gathering at Rawalsar of Rajas represented the two ancient houses of India (Hindu) rulers – Aryans;The Rajputs and non Aryan; the Nagas- who had all along being fighting among themselves for the supremacy of their Kingship and culture".

The fact that Naga dynasty had been living beyond Himalayas is proved by the Tibetan language called Nag Bhasha.

Nagas invaded India in about 600 BC and established their Kingdom in hilly areas extending from Assam to Kashmir. It was out of their rivalry against Aryan Kings that Ambhi fought against Prikshat. Later the Rajputs subdued and deprived them of their crowns. The Guru advised them to unite and rise as one man against the Mughal imperialism.

At the invitation of Raja Sidh Sen¹: Rajput ruler of Mandi, Guru Gobind Singh proceeded to Mandi from Rawalsar. When he reached near the capital, the Raja personally came to receive him. The Raja offered his own litter and himself worked as a bearer when the pole of the litter remained half a cubit above and did not touch Raja's shoulder. (Records of Mandi State). At Mandi, the Guru first encamped on the western side of the river Beas, one mile east wards from the city. The Guru was cordially received and lodged in the Padal.

One day the Guru ordered a brass vessel to be placed on the slowly-moving waves of the river as target for firing practice. Bhai Santokh Singh says that as the Guru willed, only Raja was successful in firing at and upsetting the floating vessel. Guru was very much pleased with the Raja and blessed him with immunity of his kingdom from foreign aggression in the decades to come despite revolutions and foreign invasions saying: "Whosoever tries to seize your Kingdom from you or your descendents will have his house upset like vessel fired upon by you."

During the Guru's sojourn at Mandi, Raja Sidh Sen showed him many interesting and beautiful places in his territory and accompanied him on many hunting expeditions. One day he took him to Kamlahgarh fort, 30 miles west of Mandi, and boasted about its impregnability in his terms, tracing its history back right from the time of Alexander the Great, after whose name there exists a mountain range called Sikandre ki Dhar and who besieged the fort successfully but returned disappointedly. At this the Guru said: **"Well for Sikhs no fort is impregnable."**

At another occasion the Raja took the Guru to the site of another fortress under construction. It was named after Raja's name as Sidhkot. The Guru ordered his Sikhs to build fortress of

their own on the opposite hillock. It was named Gurukot and Guru stayed therein for sometime. There is also a small fountain after Guru's name at the foot of "Gogre-ki-Dhar" at a distance of six miles from Mandi. The story goes that, in a hunting expedition, the Raja asked the Guru for a cup of fresh water at this place. The Guru struck his spear against the earth and pure water oozed out. Perhaps this was the spear which the Raja begged from the Guru and kept it as a sacred relic in Kamlagarh and worshipped it daily.

At the time of departure from Mandi, the Guru gave to the Raja some weapons including a scimitar, a sword (which according to Mandi State records is kept in State armory), a harp, a bed, a pair of Sandals and a matchlock offered by a Rajput Chief at Rawalsar (Kept in Padal Gurdwara). There is also a picture of the Guru preserved among collection of pictures in state.

On Guru's return journey to Anandpur, the Raja accompanied him as far as Gurukot. After crossing 'Sikandre Ki Dhar', he stayed for a night at Jhandewal or khandt, where a mound stands in his memory. His next halt was at kichhlor on the western bank of Sutlej after passing through Talwara, Matial, Sajod and Katlu villages. Starting there from, he reached Anandpur via Nainadevi after halting at Maleta.

Guru's blessings given to the Raja and his descendants were meticulously honored by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Though Mandi became a tributary state, the officers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not enter the Mandi town respecting the Guru's boon. After his death in 1839, Kamlahgarh was seized and Raja Balbir Sen taken as prisoner to Amritsar by General Ventura under the orders of Kanwar Naunihal Singh. The spear of Guru Gobind Singh kept in Kamlahgarh was taken away to Lahore and kept there along with other weapons and Kalghi of Guru Gobind Singh.

Alluding to this event, Bhai Santokh Singh says that Guru's prediction about Kamlahgarh's fall to the Sikhs proved true as well as curse upon the conquerors of Mandi. The state was seized

by the Sikhs in the reign of Maharaja Kharak Singh, whose death was followed by murder of his son, Nunihal Singh, which brought an end to his line of succession.

After annexation of the Punjab in 1849, some of the weapons of Guru Gobind Singh were acquired by Lord Dalhousie² in April, 1851 and taken to England for his² personal possession. Of these relics, six weapons, including the spear seized by the Sikh army from Kamalgharh, have been brought back to India on first January this year. The spear is 5 foot and 5 inches long with sharp pointed triangular blade one foot in length.

Footnotes

1. Sen is affixed to the name of elder member of the reigning family of Mandi, destined to be crowned as Raja and all other siblings are named as Singh. - Editor.
2. The India office library papers clearly indicate the special interest shown by Lord Dalhousie to acquire the sacred weapons of Guru Gobind Singh ji. A note prepared by Lord Dalhousie reads:

‘A set of arms, including spears, swords etc; which Sikh tradition assert to have belonged to Guru Gobind Singh. It would not be politic to permit any Sikh institution to obtain possession, either by way of gift (for intrinsic value of them is insignificant or by measure of sale of these war like symbols of a war like faith). If the court should desire to have these arms for the collection, they shall be transmitted, but if the court is not solicitous regarding them, I should feel gratified by receiving permission to purchase them from Toshkhana for my self. They have narturally much interest in my eyes, and would form a memorial which would hereafter be highly prized as well as by myself as by those who follow me.’

A shrewd diplomat and a crafty statesman Dalhousie very well knew the sanctity and importance of the relics attached to the fair name of Tenth Master; father of

superb Khalsa faith and weighing these entire points he conspired to achieve these prized possession from East India Company.

The weapons of Guru Gobind Singh were acquired in 1966 by paying 25000 Pounds to great great grand-daughter of Lord Dalhousie, Ms Broun Lindsay. (Reference: Sikh art and culture; by Susan Stronge-page 81, Edited by Kerry Brown). Still there are certain weapons which are lying in the custody of the Britishers and need to be given back to the rightful heirs ie Sikh Panth.

Editor Adds:-

The visit of the tenth Master has been preserved in the official records of Mandi state for posterity. His itinerary in the hilly areas of Bilaspur and beyond in the most complex and dangerous region in view of the open hostility of hill Rajas is the most outstanding and the courageous act. His basic aim was to enable his country men: rulers and ruled; to enable them to awake and arise to stand against the oppression of the Mughals. His sermon to the chicken hearted hill Rajas, which was not adhered to by them; to unite against the great bigot, is a glowing tribute to the oppressed classes.

Sir Lepel Henry Griffin while writing about the Rewalsar in 'Rajas of Punjab-1870' says that Rawalsar Lake is 6000 ft above sea level. He further says that it is celebrated for its floating islands and a sacred place of pilgrimage. To the Buddhists of Tibet, Rewalsar is especially sacred. They resort to it in great number during cold season, generally under the guidance of a Lama. They approach the Lake from a considerable distance on their hands and knees, and it is considered a meritorious action to carve their names on the surrounding rocks, which are thus covered with inscription, some of them is exceedingly curious.

Mr. Vigne in his travelogue has given a very interesting account of the blessing given by the Great Guru; he says during his stay in Mandi, he heard a very cryptic saying prevalent:

'Mandi Ko jo Lutenge, Asmani Gole Chhutenge'

Mandi State became a tributary of the Sikh empire and honoring the blessings of the Guru; Sardar Desa Singh Majithia (1832), later on, his son Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia; the Nazim of all the hill states under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, never entered the Mandi state and collected the tribute on the out skirt of the capital, and this arrangement went well till the demise of the Lion of Punjab.

Sir Lepel Henry Griffin says that Mandi was supposed in ancient times to have contained 360 forts, but of these only ten are now in any preservation: Kamlagarh, Shapur, Madhopur, Beira, Kalipur, Tungal, Bajarkot, Dangri, Bagra and Karimpur, while only first five are garrisoned. Kamlagarh is the most celebrated forts in all the hill country.

Forts in Mandi were considered of vital importance in view of much talked about attack on Ladhakh and Tibet; an idea of Dogra Brothers. Certain historians are of the view that Prince Naunihal Singh wanted to engage the Sikh troops at Lahore. During the reign of Maharaja Kharak Singh, under the orders of Kunwar Naunihal Singh, General Ventura (he was decorated with the title of Count of Mandi i.e. the Sardar of Mandi) was deputed to subdue Mandi, on the pretext that the Raja Balbir Sen, refused to pay tribute or for taking possession of Forts in Mandi in view of its strategic importance and reduce Mandi. General Ventura encamped seven miles inside the capital much against the honoured convention set up earlier. General Ventura after receiving the tribute from the Raja; arrested him and in November, 1840, seized Kamlagarh fort. **(Which according to Guru Gobind Singh ji; no fort is impregnable for the Sikhs).** After complete subjugation of the country, Raja Balbir Sen was arrested, and taken as prisoner to Amritsar and kept as hostage till he was set free by Maharaja Sher Singh. The author of the essay has very explicitly brought out the sequence of events leading to the death and destruction of line of succession of Maharaja Kharak Singh and that of Kunwar Naunihal Singh. The fate of the perpetrators of the attack, on Mandi also met the same fate.

Under the charge of a young English officer Col. Foulkes, an assistant; General Ventura, left behind a detachment that looked after the affairs of forts in Mandi. A mutiny broke out amongst the troops on account of reported unsavory political conditions in Punjab and the Colonel was advised to leave the capital, but the English man declined and on the same night he was awakened, beheaded and cut to pieces by the Sikh army men.

General Ventura also met the same fate. In the year 1841, when it was made known to him that he is being sent to Peshawar, he tendered his resignation which was not accepted; subsequently he applied for fifteen days leave and fled towards Ludhiana in English territory. He shamelessly bargained his assets and the valuable military secrets of Lahore Durbar with British government for Rs. 80000/- rupees. After staying in Shimla for sometimes, he set sail for France and died there due to pleurisy on 3rd April, 1845, thus ending his line of succession. (Reference: Sikh raj de Badeshi Karinday; Bawa Prem singh)

It shall be interesting to note that after the first Sikh war all the Punjab hill states came under the protection of Britishers and a treaty was signed between Raja of Mandi and the Governor General on 24th Oct, 1846. Srl 4 of the treaty says that the Raja shall pull down and level the forts of Kamlahgarh and Nanatpur and never attempt to rebuild them. (Records of Mandi State)

The course of history has proved in all fairness the blessing given to the House of Mandi by the Tenth Guru or it was the adage doing currency during that time?

Raja Joginder Sen of Mandi built a Gurudwara at Rawalsar, in 1930.

The "Spokesman" weekly, 1966

Court Poets of Guru Gobind Singh

Poets have their own place in society. In all the ages they have been a source of inspiration and they have played a conspicuous part in shaping the destiny of a nation. The land of five rivers rightly takes pride in having produced famous poets from time to time. The Punjab is not only cradle of the Rishis who composed Vedas and Gita. It also gave birth to Charpat Nath, Baba Farid, Guru Nanak, Chhaju, Piloo, Shah Husain, Bhai Gurdas, Chander Bardai, Damodar, Mahakavi Santokh Singh etc. With Guru Nanak originated a new style of spiritual poetry which touched the hearts of the people and elevated the layman to higher pedestal of humanity. It received impetus at the hand of and flourished in the time Great Guru's successors. Guru Gobind Singh gave it a secular tinge with a view to provide the people with guidance in their worldly affairs. He made tremendous efforts to collect, edit and translate into Lingua Franca of India, old and rare Sanskrit works which were out of access and unintelligible to a layman such as Ramayana, Markandya and Bhagvat Puranas, Bhagvat Gita. Some parts of Mahabharata, stories of incarnation of Vishnu, Shiva, etc. were translated into Bhakha by himself and thus came into a unique Encyclopedia of Indian mythology now forming a part of Dasam Granth. He was too keen to accomplish the translation of whole Mahabharata. He himself rendered into simple Hindi a great portion of epics now known as Gyan Parbhod. The rest of the work was entrusted to his court poets. They not only completed the translation of Mahabharata but also rare works on Pingal (rules of versification), Panch Tantar etc were reproduced.

Guru Gobind Singh was a great patron of poets and artists and scholars. At Paonta and Anandpur several poets and learned people received his hospitality, refuge and patronage. Usually their number is put at fifty two and accordingly Giani Gyan Singh gives us the list of their names.

1. Ude Ram (Rai)	2. Allu	3. Assa (Singh)
4. Alam.	5. Ali (Husain)	6. Amrit Rai
7. Ishwar	8. Sukha (Singh)	9. Sukhdev.
10. Sukkhu	11. Sukhia.	12. Sudama
13. Sainapati	14. Hans Ram	15. Kalua.
16. Kunwresh	17. Gunia	18. Gurdas.
19. Chandan	20. Khan Chand	21. Chanda
22. Nand Lal	23. DharamSingh	24. Dhian Singh
25. Dhanna Singh	26. Nihal Chand	27. Nanad Singh
28. Bihari Lal*	29. Ballabh	30. Ballu
31. Bidhi Chand	32. Birkha	33. Brij Lal.
34. Madan Gir	35. Madhu	36. Man Chand
37. Mala Singh	38. Mangal	39. Man Das
40. Rawal	41. Lakkha	42. Ani Rai
43. Shyam	44. Sunder	45. Sohan
46. Hear	47. Tekhan	48. Daya Singh
49. Nanu	50. Nishchal Das	51. Ram Chander
52. Roshan Singh		

*(Note: - The author has given Pindi Lal in lieu of Bihari Lal, in his '**Dashmesh De Darbari Kavi**', 1957 which appeared in Fateh-Delhi and 'Gurmat Parkash'. The names of poets given in Mahan Kosh, match with the list given above-Editor)

In the words of Guru Sahib, Makhawal was expanded and renamed Anandpur just after the battle of Bhangani. It was according to Prof Puran Singh, a centre of life of the people; spiritual mental and physical. Around the Master, assembled poets, painters and scholars and he encouraged the development of arts and learning in his people. The disciples were sent to Benares to learn Sanskrit. He caused many Sanskrit books to be translated into Hindi. (The Book of Ten Masters-page 98) In fact, after return from Nahan, the faithful had returned to their own line of work, forgetting the injuries inflicted on them by the army men of the Rajas during the battle of Bhangani. There was a tremendous revival of literature and art at Anandpur. We have accounts of this period from the Dhyanam of Bhai Vir Singh ji, in the brouchers published by Khalsa Tract Society, Amritsar

Mohina and Sohina who were accomplished poets and singers served as gardeners. Basically they were rich and well to do people

and relinquished the worldly pleasures for the love of the Master. Hans who was a great pundit, painter and leading monk brought an offering of a painting of sunrise for him. In the opinion of a writer some Muslim poets listed above hailed from Baghdad. Alam mentioned at serial 4 above was one of the famous poets of Aurangzeb's era. He produced the celebrated work known as Kam Kandla. He was a Brahmin by birth, but on marrying a Muslim women poet he changed his religion and became an outcaste. He took refuge at the Guru's court to save himself from the wrath of his brotherhood.

To quote a Manuscript diary of an Udasi Sadhu owned by Hazura Singh, Granthi of Hazur Sahib (Deccan) the number of writers, including poets calligraphist, translators etc. was at one time eighty. On the eve of important functions, small manuscripts of Gurbani were prepared for distribution among visitors. Pundits and other scholars were employed to teach various arts and sciences. Not less than five Qazis were appointed on monthly remuneration to impart instructions in Arabic and Persian, and to translate rare works of the language in Bhakha. (Khalsa Samachar, Gurburab Edition, dated 6th January, 1940).

Sr. Surjit Singh Gandhi in 'History of Sikh Guru's Retold' says; The Guru had gathered round him a comity of literary luminaries. He is not in agreement with Sikh tradition which fixes the number of poets as fifty two, because the arrival at or departure from the Guru's darbar depended on each individual's sweet will. He says the number fifty two has acquired sanctity in in view of its historical importance as the number of Sidds also numbered fifty two. In addition to one hundred poets the author has given a list of twenty five thinkers as well, with reference to Prof Piara Singh Padam. The above disclouser by Sr.Gandhi holds good in view of the manuscript held by an Udasi sadhu as referred to by the author of this essay-Editor

Some of these penmen served the Guru as clerks, accountants and calligraphists. They drafted Hukamnamas for him and managed his household affairs. The forefathers of Bhai Kesar

Singh Chhibar, the celebrated author of *Bansawali Namah* served as Diwans to Guru. He compiled his work on the basis of records (*Bahi-Khatas*) of his forefathers. Roshan Singh was a calligraphist. Asa Singh was the custodian of Guru's seal. Dhana Singh was in charge of his stables. Bhai Nand Lal was his envoy and in charge of langar. His Persian works include *Zindgi Namah*, *Jot Vigas*, *Aruzul-Alfaz*, and *Tansif-o-Sana*.

Gurdas and Ani Rai wrote *Vars* and *Jangnamah* respectively eulogizing Guru's military genius and exploits. In this connection may also be mentioned the odes written by Mushki and Chhabila; Guru's Court Bards (*Dhadis*). Sainapati compiled Guru's biography in verse named as *Guru Sobha*; which is of immense historical value, and translated Chanakya's *Arth Shastra*. Tansukh Rai of Lahore rendered *Panch Tantara* in to Hindi. Girdhari Lal of Agra prepared *Pingal*. Hans Ram and Amrit Rai were awarded sixty thousands each for translation of *Karan* and *Sabha Parles* of Mahabharata. Similarly Mangal and Kunwareswari wrote *Shalya* and *Drone Parles*. There is a voluminous manuscript lying in Punjab record office, Simla (Now at Patiala) known as *Ashwamedha Parle* written by Tek Khan. The book is profusely illustrated and written in fine Gurmukhi hand. The date of the completion of the book goes back to the time when Guru Gobind Singh was hardly four year old. Probably the poet is same; Tek Khan, as the one whose name has been included in the list of 52 poets given above. He might have contributed his labor towards the completion of translation of Mahabharata by presenting his work afterwards when he joined Guru's services. It is said all theses writings formed a collection weighing about nine mounds. It was named as 'Vidya Dhar' or 'Vidya Sar'*. This precious treasure of learning and valuable knowledge was lost at the time of sack of Anandpur. Some of the folios were unearthed by Mahakavi Santokh Singh who reproduced the writings of the celebrated poets contained the same (*Vidya Dhar*), in his own work *Guru Partap Suraj Granth*. A Part of it comprising some *Parles* of Mahabharata was presented by somebody to Maharaja of Patiala who got the remaining part of the epic translated by his own court poets.

How generous and liberal was Guru Gobind Singh in rewarding his poet employee is abundantly evident from Mangal's

writings. He is all praise for his patronage. At a place he appreciates the Kashmiri Shawls bestowed by him upon his poets and at the other he says by the beat of drum, 'There is plenty and happiness at Anandpur. One who is in search of bliss should come hereO, Most powerful and Glorious King of Kings, Guru Gobind Singh! You have revived the prosperity of the time of Raja Bhoj.'

Anand ko data Guru Sahib Gobind Rai,
Chaho Jo Anand to Anandpur aiye.
Prabal Pratapi Patshah Guru Gobind Singh ji,
Bhoj ki si mauj tere roj roj paiye.

Hans Ram says, that poets rewarded by the Guru with horses and elephants along with requisite paraphernalia while proceeding to their homes were taken by the simple village folks for Rajahs who had come to attack their village. Hans Ram assures them that he is none other than the beggar poet, so abundantly rewarded by Guru Gobind Singh; they should not fear him. These poets following the convention and traditions of ancient Indian poets found in the Guru, incarnation of Lord Ram and Krishna because they regarded him as protector of Hindus. Sudama very aptly compared himself with his name sake of Dwapar age who was a class mate of Lord Krishna.

Preet kar jane Guru Gobind ke mane tante
Wahe tun Gobind, wahe Baman Sudama Main.

On the one hand Guru rewarded his employees generously on the other hand he was strict disciplinarian too. He never spared a delinquent. Once Assa Singh Mutsadi infringed the rule by issuing a cheque (Hundi) in the name of a deserving poor fellow under the Guru's seal without the latter's knowledge and permission. Though the cause was good no doubt, but it was served through violation of principle, which Guru would not tolerate. Assa Singh, out of fear and repentance began to absent himself from his duty. The Guru knew it all. He called for him, brought home to him his offence, reprimanded and reinstated him. Similar was the case of Roshan Singh calligraphist. He always aspired to be a poet. Once he stole some verses of a poet which were passed on to him for

Caligraphing. He was caught red-handed in a novel way. He was also reprimanded and granted at the same time a boon that he would become a great poet when he took birth next time so that his aspiration might be full filled. Tradition says, he was reborn as Mahakavi Santokh Singh. Like wise Chandan's pride knew no bounds as he had some verses which no body criticize or appreciate. The Guru saw a suitable match for him in Dhana Singh, the stable keeper. He bade him to do the job. Chandan fell flat. Thus the Guru taught and trained men of letters in his school of discipline and how to put into practice high morale professed and pronounced so loudly by them.

Editor Adds:-The author of the article also produced an article of the similar name in Punjabi, which appeared in 'Fateh Delhi' and 'Gurmat Parkash'.

Alluding to 52 court poets and the 'Vidya Dhar or 'Vidya Sagar' granth: Mahakvi Bhai Santokh Singh says in Gurpartap Suraj, Rut3, and Ank51.

Hum bhi ketak karhe bakhani
 Kahen khalsey ke hit bani
 Adi Mahabharata je Aaan
 Bhakha Sab ki karat sujan
 So hum panth het karvaven
 Pathihn aap subhun sunaven
 Hute Bavanja kavi Guru pass
 Sab hi bani Karen parkash
 Satgur sab ikatrit karvaven
 Patrey Dirag par likhvaven
 Nam granth ko Vidya Dhar
 Rakhan kino Sri Prabh nagar

On one hand, his sermon to the faithful was aimed at enrichment and elevation of the moral character of the masses, and on the other he saw to it that the poets and artist are duty bound to maintain high standard of social behaviour in public life and put into practice what they wrote. This was basically the burden of the couplet which he wrote to Aurangzeb in Zafarnamah.

**Hamu mard ba-eed shawad sukhanvar
Na shikme digar dar dahane digar. [Zafarnamh-55]**

Bhai Vir Singh has given an account of the Mohina and Sohina in Kalgidhar Chamatkar: A group of devotees was coming to Anandpur. While passing through the forest of Raipur Rani, they were attacked by robbers and subsequently saved by an old Sikh. The robbers fled after injuring the gallant old Sikh and left him badly wounded. The group of devotees how ever proceeded to Anandpur. The injured Sikh felt thirsty and asked for water from the couple (Mohina and Sohina) who were on their way to Mandir to make offering to their diety. The couple thought that the water shall be defiled before offering to diety. On their refusal the old Sikh said, 'He will not give a glimpse of Himself'. After completion of the ritual the couple rushed back to the spot where they left the badly injured and thirsty Sikh. To their horror the Sikh had already died. They were filled with remorse and gravely regretted their action. They renounced their riches and left for Anandpur. Once at their desired place, they started work under the patronage of Bhai Kesar Singh, the head gardener at Anadpur sahib. They toiled hard and produced and displayed varied type of beautiful flowers and the head gardener presented beautiful flowers to the master produced by the couple. But the Master was evasive and said in a reflective mood; 'Not yet'. The couple produced a number of out of the season flowers for presentation to the Master. But there was no response. At the end of one of the produce, one Roda Jalali Faqir asked the couple for a bunch of flowers, but the couple declined to part with the produce exclusively grown for the Master. The Fakir during the night stole and plucked all the flowers and presented to the Master next morning. The couple on the other hand was disgusted and disheartened on seeing the destruction and ruination of their hard work. The remorse couple fainted. But the great ubiquitous Master knew all and ran bare foot to the hut of the couple and took the fainted couple in his lap and consoled them and seeing the radiant face of the Master they knew that 'He has given his glimpse'. They were filled with internal light.

-Editor

Anandpur: The City of Bliss

Mangal, a court poet of Guru Gobind Singh once wrote to his friend, 'The Guru is the giver of Anand (The Bliss) and if you want it, do come to Anandpur.' Every Sikh at his baptism ceremony is enjoined upon to consider himself the offspring of the Guru Gobind Singh and Mata Sahib Kaur and a citizen of Anandpur in order to merge his identity into the brotherhood of Khalsa and achieve a new and common personality of a Singh. Some fifty years back when Anandpur was not yet put on the Railway map, pilgrims(on foot) of Anandpur used to sing aloud sweetly: 'O, my life let us go and reside at Anandpur where live the mediators on God.'

*"Chal jinde Anandpur vasisie,
Jithe rehnde nam de rassie."*

Such a selfless mediator (an Akali) was observed by historian Cunningham constructing an approach road to the colony of Anandpur, as service to the God and Guru. In the ancient days this tract of land situated in the Shivalik Hills was a thick forest in which bears, lions and especially the elephants roamed freely thus giving it the name of "Hathant." It is said that the place where Guru Teg Bahadur meditated at Makhawal and which is known as Bhora Sahib, was the heritage of Rishi Vashisht, the tutor of Lord Rama, in Treta Yug.

Makhawal

Anandpur the second sacred throne of the Sikhs which is now situated on the left bank of the Sutlej in the District of Hoshiarpur (now Ropar), originally formed a part of Kehlur (Bilaspur) state since merged into Himachal Pradesh. This tract of land known as Makhawal after the name of Makho, a giant, was purchased by Guru Teg Bahadur from Raja Bhim Chand in 1665 for Rs 5000 for laying out a new city. The colony was

christened as **Nanki- Chak** (Chak Nanki) by the Guru after her mothers' name, second in Sikh history, the first being Amritsar ie Guru Ka Chak . The residence of Guru Teg Bahadur is named as Purani Haveli or Guru Ka Mahal.

History made at Anandpur

Guru Gobind Singh, who was born at Patna in 1666, came over here after spending his childhood there. According to his autobiography it was here in *Madr Desha* that he was brought up and educated. It was at Bhora Sahib that Kashmiri Pundits waited upon Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and requested him to undo the wrongs done to them by Aurangjaeb. The Guru laid his life for their cause in 1675. Sisganj marks the place where the chopped head of the Guru was cremated at Anandpur. Just after cremation the Guru moved to a place now called Akal Bunga to console the aggrieved Sikhs. He asked them to be ready for any sacrifice that might be demanded of them in facing the atrocities committed by the then Government. Damdama Sahib is the place where he was anointed and proclaimed as Guru this was the place where he gave exemplary punishment to his corrupt Masands. He burnt them alive for their acts of omission and commission, with them was burnt the corruption and crime and misappropriation of public funds. It is evident from the sacred writings of the Guru that he composed the verses of Ram Avtar at the banks of Sutlej near the Hillock of Nainadevi:

**Netar tung ke charn-tar sutdarar tir turang
Sri Bhagwat purn kio Raghubar katha parsang.**

Thus the Guru made history in Makhwal –Anandpur, every brick and brook of which provides ample material to the historian.

Relic and Memorials

Guru Gobind Singh stayed in the Guru Ka Mahal up to 1688 when after his victory at Bhangani he founded the new city of Anandpur as an extension of Guru-ka-Chak (Makhwal). In the heart of city was laid out the fort of Anandgarh which served as the new palace of the Guru. The Guru lived here up to last and most prolonged siege of the city in 1704. There are Gurdwaras

Takhat Keshgarh and Tamboo Sahib which preserve the memory of historic Baisakhi of 1699, the immortal date on which he gave birth to the Khalsa. A society where in co existed fearless, energetic, faithful, holy and peaceful people. The five faithful who initially volunteered to receive *Pahul* from him were an amalgamation of prominent virtues of life ie Daya Ram (compassion), Dharam Das (righteousness), Himmat (Courage), Mohkam Chand (Fortitude) and Sahib Chand (Master of self). The latter is situated at the highest altitude facing Nainadevi Hill. From here can be seen the snow-capped hills of Simla in the winter.

There are certain old weapons of the Guru and his Sikhs which are preserved in Keshgarh. There are two lances, out of which the bigger one having a blade two feet nine inches long was thrust by the Guru in rock out of which gushed out a stream still flowing near Guru-ka-Lahore. The other was bestowed by him upon Bhai Bachittar Singh blessing him to face the furious elephant let loose by the Hill Chiefs for reducing the Anandpur fort. Third weapon is the sword wielded in the battlefield of Karbala by the martyr prince Hasan (Hussain Iman) son of Hazrat Ali. It was presented to the Guru by Pir Badruddin of Sadhura popularly known as Pir Budhu Shah. Two edged sword, Khanda is the fourth weapon unleashed by the Guru on Baisakhi day of 1699. There is another Khanda wielded by Baba Gurbaksh Singh Nihang; who laid his life defending Harimandir Sahib against the onslaughts of Ahmed Shah Abdali. Another relic is the matchlock which tested the fidelity of Dala Singh. Further there is a dagger said to have been used by Guru's assassin at Nanded in 1708.

Adjoining to Keshgarh is Manji Sahib which commemorates the place where sons of Guru used to play. Lohgarh, Holgarh. Fatehgarh and Taragarh were the forts which fortified the city. Holgarh stands in the memory of the place where the army of the Guru maneuvered. The action was known as Mahalla (The charge) still memorized in the shape of Hola Mahalla the celebration being initiated himself by the Guru on Chet Vadi Ekam 1757 Bikrami (March 1700).

In planning, laying out, developing and governing the city the Guru put into practice what philosophers and thinkers like Plato and Chankya professed. It was Begampura of Bhagat Ravidass's vision. It was a small republic surrounded by small principalities headed by petty hill Chiefs. It was a small secular state in the times of Great Bigot, which gave asylum to poets like Nand Lal, Kunwresh, both victims of fanaticism of Aurangjeb. 'Live and let live' was the main feature of the unwritten constitution of the republic. Socialism grew and flourished here under Guru's guidance. Collective farming, common kitchen, voluntary military service were some of the features of the new order which discarded caste distinction and priest hood and encouraged layman to take up leadership in religious, social and political spheres. The Guru being himself an excellent poet and artist was a patron of poets and artists. Anandpur therefore became a centre of arts and learning. Handsome rewards were given to poets and painters. Alam, the celebrated author of *Madhavnal Kam Kandla*, while praising the philanthropist Guru, says that such gifts as Raja Bhoj gave were freely showered daily by **Prabal Partapi** Guru.

After the Lord

But the Glory of Anandpur was short lived and the light of lamp lit by the Guru was put out by the enemies of democracy and socialism. In 1704 the Guru had to bid farewell to the city of Bliss for good and Anandpur was ransacked. The enemy of arts and literature destroyed the treasure of art and invaluable collection of works of court poets weighing about nine mounds. Sensing this in advance the Guru appointed an Udasi Saint Gurbakhsh to look after the shrines of Guru Teg Bahadur. After conquest of Sirhind by Banda Singh Bahadur in 1710, when the Sikhs got the upper hand for some time, Sodhi Gulab Rai returned to Anadpur from Nahan State. He claimed Bhora Sahib his ancestral property and posed as successor of the tenth Guru despite the loud protests by Gubakhsh who left the place out of disgust and cursed Gulab Rai that his game was a matter of four days. It was proved to be true and the pretender and his four sons died in four days. The tragedy cautioned the brothers of Gulab Rai to behave properly. Sodhi Sham Singh and his successors

proved too sober to desecrate any shrine or to fall in line with Gulab Rai. Rather Sodhis Nahar Singh, Sujan Singh and Diwan Singh did considerable service to improve the old buildings of the Gurudwaras.

Desecration and Decay

Anti Sikh elements, however carried on their nefarious deeds. Raja of Bilaspur converted the Anandgarh fort into barracks of his army and Diwankhana was used by Raja for cane crushing work. Babas Jalmast Singh and Sher Singh condemned and challenged the action of the Raja who ultimately yielded to the wishes of the Sikhs. He withdrew his men from both the shrines. The Sikhs repaired the decaying buildings and arranged for celebration of Hola Mahalla again.

Then came the turns of martyrs Gurbakhsh Singh and Natha Singh who served as Jathedars of Anandpur and did a lot to improve the pitiable condition of Gurdawaras. The will and belief in the everlasting glory of the Khalsa of Shahid Natha Singh was very powerful. Once he asked the local chief Sardar Suba Singh to assign a handsome Jagir to Anandpur Sahib. The latter in view of circumstances unfavorable to the Sikhs said, 'Singh Sahib, what will be the use of Jagir when Sikhs cannot visit the shrine unmolested. The Shahid said 'Sardar Ji the Khalsa is immortal and so its glory, anti Khalsa forces is perishable and also you and I. No offspring of mine and thine will be there to witness the truthfulness of the fact.' The Sardar felt perturbed over the prophecy of Shahid and assigned a good Jagir to the Gurudwara, but the prophecy proved inevitable.

Anandpur rises up again

In 1790 Sardar Baghel Singh visited Anadpur (sahib) with troops, when Bhai Darbara Singh was the Jathedar. He got himself baptized here; built a small *Bungah*, got the old building repaired and gave village of Baddon in Jagir. Raja of Kapurthala got constructed a huge Baoli in Kila Anandgarh. Bhai Darbara Singh was succeeded by Akali Phula Singh, who died in 1824 in the battle of Nowshehra, his successor did not allow Maharaja Ranjit Singh to enter the Gurudwara Takhat Keshgarh in 1831, when he was returning from Rupar (now Rupnagar) after his

fateful meeting with Lord William Bentick accompanied by Moran. Some sixty-four years thereafter Maharaja Narinder Singh came here to be baptized at the hands of Mahant Bhagwan Singh father of Shahid Karam Singh. He got erected the present building of Tamboo Sahib and a *Bungah* near it and another in Sisganj Sahib which was suitably repaired and decorated with paintings.

In 1913 was constituted the Sikh Shrine committee Anandpur Sahib under the president ship of Tikka Ram Naraian Singh in order to control the funds of Gurudwaras. In 1922 the control of the Gurudwaras was taken over by the Panth. The new management did a lot to repair and reconstruct the old shrines and reform the celebration of Hola. The history of modern times records the names of Sardar Kundan Singh of Baddon and Dharam Singh Engineer who rendered meritorious service to Anandpur Gurudwaras. Perhaps the remarks of a non-Sikh Education Officer 'Had the Anadpur Shrine been under the control of Govt, under the Protected Monuments Act, their condition would have been much better' provoked Giani Kartar Singh Kalaswalia, Head Granthi of Darbar Sahib Amritsar into action resulting in re-erection of Anandgarh and Keshgarh Sahib.

May the Khalsa keep burning the torch of knowledge, spiritual elevation, democracy, social uplift, art and literature lit at Anandpur by the Lord of white hawks and blue steed.

The "SPOKESMAN" Weekly, Guru Gobind Singh Number, 1965

Baisakhi in Historical Perspective

Guru Arjan Dev has aptly said that blessed are the months, days and moments which win His favor. The events which occur on these days gain importance and become outstanding dates of History. Men of history are those who shape the destiny of nations. They provide shadow to the coming events which cast the same before their occurrence. They are fore-runner of revolutions and give birth to epochs and eras. They are quite new and strange to the world growing old and yet wanting in seeking wisdom. To the world their ideas appear novel and inopportune. Such is the case of Guru Gobind Singh also who is a 'Great Misunderstood' of all times. Although everyday day of his life was eventful and every action of his was purposeful, yet some of the Baisakhi days of his life are distinguished for unparalleled glory. The Baisakhi has played a very crucial role in the lives of Gurus' and Sikhs' alike. Many important events have occurred on this day which shaped the destiny of the future generations and left a deep impact on psyche of its people.

Baisakhi¹ is a very important and sacred day. It is New Year's Day for the Sikhs. It is day of resurrection, accession, coronation, revolution, and resolution and national tragedy. History has to tell a tale of rainbow colors of this day.

It is recorded in Sakhi Book of travels of Ninth and Tenth Gurus that in reply to a question from a Sikh of Kaithal, Guru Teg Bahadur told that Baisakhi was day for worship of the Guru i.e. "**Guru Pooja**". It is the most outstanding date in the history right from the birth day of Guru Nanak which according to Panch Khand scholars is Baisakhi of 1526 Bik. (March 27, 1468). According to Prof Sahib Singh, Guru Nanak's visit to Hardwar synchronized with the Baisakhi of 1508 A.D. The Sikhs took to throng the seat of their Guru on this day every year.

On this day Guru Nanak visited Hardwar on his first Udasi, on 27th March, 1508 which fell on Monday. He demonstrated

the hollowness of offering water to the sun and so did Guru Gobind Singh in 1695. Baisakhi of 1665 was marked by Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib being sought out. (Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, page 50-51). A gathering of Sikhs at Guru's seat was ordered by Guru Amar Dass and first such assembly met at Goindwal in 1566 at the initiative of Bhai Paro. Kesar Singh Chhibar says that it was on this auspicious day in 1613 that Guru Hargobind Sahib² was married to Mata Nanaki at Amritsar after he returned from his visit to Kashmir. It was the occasion when in 1665 AD. Makhan Shah Lubana, after discarding the imposter Gurus' at Bakala, found the real Guru in Teg Bahadur meditating in an old dark cellar. He was installed Guru there and then.

A Stern Vow

Guru Teg Bahadur knew that his path was to be the same as Guru Arjan's, and he gave himself up to Aurangzeb and suffered martyrdom and a cruel death for his people's sake. In the song of Masters by Puran Singh, Guru Gobind Singh appears in the form of an ancient Huntsman, before whose arrows flies the stag of death.

'He wears the starry crest. He carries the Hawk on his thumb, and bears aloft the flag of the kingship of heaven.

'His pennon waves. His flag flutters on the walls of Heaven. The angels cry aloud to him, 'Hail, Lord and Master'

'The Rider on the Blue Horse; the wearer of the Blue Robe, he leads the Sikhs, the armies of the Heroes to defend the sacred cause and the purpose of God on earth.'

According to Giani Gyan Singh, Gobind Rai assumed Guruship after the martyrdom of his father and ascended *gaddi*³ on Baisakhi of 1676. Bhai Ram Koer descendant of Bhai Buddha and a boy of almost Guru's age performed the Tilak ceremony. Lakhi Shah Lubana who consigned to flames the head less body of Guru Teg Bahadur by setting his house on fire was present there to narrate the harrowing account of Guru's martyrdom. He told how none of the Dilwali (Dilliwala) Sikhs dared to accept the Government challenge to take away Guru's dead body. Hearing this, in the words of Kavi Santokh Singh, Guru thundered to proclaim that he would remodel the Sikhs in such a

way as not to allow a Sikh to save his skin in the face of national calamity or danger to the cause of country. He would not bow, rather stand erect and aloft like *Sameru Parbat*. He would be distinguishable like a Lion among the beasts. This was a sacred pledge and a stern vow which was fulfilled after 23 years in 1699.

Background

Baisakhi's of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Two centuries before Guru Nanak proclaimed, "There is no Hindu, no Musلمان," when after a dip in *Bein* rivulet at Sultanpur in 1499, he formed a new idea of redressing the human ills. To become pure, "*Sachiara*" was his ideal. To bow low to the will of God was the means, to over come falsehood.

**Kiv Sachiara Hoeye, Kiv Kurae Tuttai Pal
Hukam Razai Challana Nanak Likhya Nal (Japji)**

A century thereafter when sacred tank and a temple had been built and a new colony of Sikhs established firmly at Amritsar, fifth Nanak took into his hand the compilation of first secular holy Scripture of the world in 1599. Granth Sahib, termed as 'Mr. Book' in the words of Ripley the author of 'Believe it or not' and widely known as Bible of Sikhs, when completed in 1604, was installed in Hari Mandir now known as Golden Temple which in Ripley's words, cost \$40,000,000.

The new religion went through a gradual metamorphosis in succeeding years and their faith became more and more militant. Under Guru Hargobind Sahib and his successors the Sikhs still strengthened their commonality. With Guru Teg Bahadur we come to the advent of an overwhelming enemy, Aurangzeb who vowed he would convert all with in his reach to Islamism. Guru Teg Bahadur proved more than a match for him when the former proved the hollowness of his vow, as Suraj Parkash tells us, by showing him three black chillies remaining intact out of a heap of commodity set on fire. Guru Gobind Rai's vow was a reply to that of mighty Emperor. He declared fearlessly.

Falsehood is rife in the two religions, I would come out with the third, dominating.

To put this into practice he had to wage a long war against evil, poverty, ignorance, slavery, immorality and what not. Says he: 'The sins committed in the name of salvation put to shame the sins themselves.' For example his own Masands were one of the great evils of his time. They were corrupt and immoral. He gave them exemplary punishment and their agency forming a liaison between the Sikhs and the Guru was abolished. The Sikhs thus came under Guru's direct control and came to be known as Khalsa (the King's own). The great bigot was hell bent to convert all Hindus to Islam. He imposed Zazia and created an atmosphere of utmost degradation for the Hindu subjects irrespective of their status except the Rajputs who had prostrated themselves before Mughal emperors. The Hindu subjects were not allowed to carry arms, ride on elephant, palanquin and ride a horse of Arabic or Iraqi descent.

Note:-During the life time of Guru Gobind Singh many important incidences have occurred on this sacred day of Baisakhi as reported and recorded in the Sikh history, the same are being given here under in chronological order. Incidentally these happenings are recorded in author's article written in Punjabi published in Gurmat Parkash-under the caption '**Guru Gobind Singh dian Baisakhian**'-Editor.

1. On 29th March, 1680 (Monday, Baisakhi of 1737) A Kumrao Khatri of Lahore presented shagun of his daughter Jito to the Master and Guru ji married Jito ji on 22 June, 1686 by creating Guru Ka Lahore at Anandpur. It was the same occasion; a devout Sikh from Kabul brought a woolen tent as a present for the great Guru. It was a beautiful, splendid, artistically crafted tent and inset laid with intricate work made out of very thin wires of gold and silver. Its cost at that time was Rs. 2.5 lacs. This is what G.S.Chhabra has to say about this valuable piece of artistic work exclusively created for the Master, "The costliest and most magnificent of such presents said to have been made to him on the occasion of Baisakhi in 1680, was a woolen tent on which were embroidered in gold and silver numerous objects and scenes of beauty

and splendor. The tent was the humble offering of a Sikh from Kabul named Duni Chand; others also helped him in the preparation. Its magnificence surpassed that of even the Emperor. (**Advanced studies in the history of Punjab**).

2. On 29th march, 1682 (Monday, Baisakhi of 1739) Bhai Nand Lal Goya, a Persian expert and a famous poet came to Anandpur along with the *sangat* of Multan to pay obeisance at the feet of Master and presented his book 'Bandagi Nama' and requested for *Namdan*. Satguru blessed and gave proper robe of honor and renamed the book as 'Zindagi Nama'.

**Aabey Haiva Pur Shuda Chun Jamey O,
Zindagi Nama (bandgi Nama) Shuda Jan Namey O.**

{Bandgi Namah, a collection of 514 couplets was presented to Guru Sahib by Bhai Nand Lal. After listening to the entire composition, Guru Sahib changed word 'Bandgi Namah' to 'Zindgi Namah' as occurring in couplet number 502 retaining the rhyme of the couplet intact. (**Sachi Preet by Haribhajan Singh**)-Editor

Bhai Nand Lal secured employment in the year 1683, in the court of Badshahzada Muhammad Muazam (Bahadur Shah) and served as a link between the two in times to come.

3. In response to a directive dated 20th November, 1693 issued by King Emperor Aurangzeb to Fauzdar of Sirhind which reads as: 'it shall be in the fitness of things if the Guru Gobind (Singh) behaves like a Sadhu and lives like his ancestors, not to be get addressed as 'Sacha Patshah' by his followers, not to organize gatherings, avoid Window Audience (Jharokha Darshan) and not to observe the manners and customs of royalty failing which his home and hearth be perished and he be exiled from his native state.' Besides giving a befitting reply to the Fauzdar Guru Sahib gave a call to his Sikhs to keep arms and not to cut hair and beard and come to Anandpur on Baisakhi of 1751 AD (29th March 1694). The Sikhs from far and wide responded to the call of their Master and

gathered at Anandpur in large number after experiencing great obstacles, skirmishes with Government officials and a frightful journey. It was a big show. Benevolent Guru patted his Sikhs for their acts of bravery and bringing in the arms and horses; exhorted them to present only the arms and horses to the Darbar in future and started preparation for the war. The Great bigot issued another edict dt 13 Feb, 1695 from Kilkila that baring Rajput, none shall keep arms and ride planquin, elephant and horse of Arabian/Iraqi breed'.

(‘Sikh itihās de Partakh Darshan’ by S.Randhir Singh)

4. 29th March, 1697 (Monday, Baisakhi of 1754 Bik) out of the assembled gathering a holy soul implored the Guru to enlighten the Sikhs of the genius of the world.

Tum kaho dev sarbang bichar

Jim kia aap karte pasar [231]

In response to this request Guru Ji started the compilation of “Bachittar Natak”, this wonderful and splendid work was completed in the month of 14th June, 1698 (15 Har, 1755), when the Dasam Granth in its original form came into existence under the personal supervision of the great Master. It is pertinent to mention that the literary pursuits of the tenth Master ended with the completion of this Granth and he was busy to attend to other vocations for which he came to this world.

Baisakhi of Rawalsar

The glory of Khalsa was spreading like the rays of the rising Sun. At the invitation of Raja of Mandi the Guru went to see the floating islands in the lake of Rawalsar. People had gathered there on account of Baisakhi fair on 29th March 1694* (Baisakhi of 1751). Hill Chiefs were also there with their families. The queens and princesses were blessed by the benevolence of Guru. The princess Padma became a disciple of Guru. She had a doubt in her mind as to why the Lord gave his blessings by touching her with his bow instead of his kind hand. She was told that Guru never touched a woman except his own wife and his mother.

In view of the rumored attack which the Hill Chiefs were planning to make on the Guru, she implored the Guru to grant

her the boon that she might not live to see the destruction through warfare to come. The boon was granted and Padma breathed her last before Anandpur was besieged in 1705.

*The Sikh chronicles give the year as 1701-2, which has since been accepted. - Editor

Creation of Khalsa

On Baisakhi of 1699A.D, Sikhs assembled in large numbers at Anandpur. That fine morning he, in the words of an official of Mughal intelligence⁴ (Khufia Nawis) addressed the Sikhs thus: 'All of you embrace one religion so that unity may prevail. Discard the system of four castes for each of which a separate code of conduct is prescribed in the Shastras and behave equally with everyone: Do not claim preference over others. That way you will prosper and progress. So called sanctity attached to places of pilgrimage like Ganga be eschewed. Idols of Rama, Krishna, Brahma, Devi etc, may not be worshipped. Have faith in Guru Nanak and his successors alone. Take *Pahul* from me and eat in a common dish. Hate no body'. He said several such things. Out of the audience many Brahmins and Kashtriyas stood to oppose him. They said they were not ready to give up their faith at the bidding of an urchin. Not withstanding this, some twenty thousand people bowed before him and gave their consent. Thus was created the Khalsa. *Sachiara* (the pure) of Guru Nanak's conception. Guru Gobind Rai baptized them and got himself baptized at their hands and became Singh instead of Rai.

Sangat kini Khalsa manmukhi duhela.

Wah! Wah!! Gobind Singh ape Gur Chela.

According to Prof. Puran Singh the creation of Khalsa in India is the culmination of Guru Nanak's genius and the written character of his word. "The *Amritam* of the tenth master completely transmuted the man drawn from low and high castes of India, drawn from the Hindus or Muslims. After the *Amritam* the Khalsa resembles no parent type of his own. For making the universal nation of man-apart from the characteristic that delimit races and nations-for the evolution of one united

family of men on earth, Gobind Singh has shown the way in his Khalsa; which he brought out ready-made from his brain as Jupiter brought out Minerva. In the Khalsa is his type of universal 'superman' dead drunk with the glories and powers of the infinite, yet sweet as a woman, innocent as child, the Bhai, 'brother of all', "striking fear in naught nor himself afraid of aught." He has given to him also a form which the great master dreamt for the future universal man of God belonging to no one country, caste or creed. In the Khalsa there is seen the blending of the whole spiritual character of man of the past and the future; as if it were a new creation.

Raj Karega Khalsa

The Guru taking advantage of the opportunity impressed upon the Hill Rajahs to make alliance against the Great Bigot, Alamgir. The only hurdle in their way to come into the fold of Khalsa was their caste complex and false prestige. To this the Guru would never reconcile and there was no half way. Rattan Singh Bhangu well described the mental pain the Guru suffered as a result of his negotiation with the Rajahs. Says he: 'The Guru first thought of bestowing King-ship of Delhi upon Rajahs. But when he came to know of their being proud of being born rulers and soldiers he said, 'It is of no use to kiss the sons of others. I will bestow blessings upon Khalsa who will be the ideal ruler'.

**'In Garib Sikhān ko deiye Patshahi
Eh yad rakhain hamari Guriayi'**

'Raj Karega Khalsa' became a slogan of down trodden and have-nots'.

Baisakhi at Damdama

Inevitable as the war was, it ultimately came with all its ills, vices, and horrors. Anandpur was besieged by joint forces of hill chiefs and Mughal Governors of Lahore and Sirhind and Guru Ji had to vacate it and reached Damdama after a great sacrifice comprising his mother, four sons, three Piaras and thirty five beloved Sikhs at Chamkaur Sahib and forty *Muktas* at Mukatsar.

It was at Damdama Sahib⁵ in the present district of Bhatinda that Guru Gobind Singh celebrated the last Baisakhi on the soil of

Punjab. On this occasion a religious cum military type procession called *Mahalla* which usually paraded through the streets of Anandpur on Holi day was taken out. Gurudawara Mahalsar marks the place where maneuvers were held in the memory of this function, a fair on the occasion of Baisakhi is held annually. The village Guru Ki Kashi is known as Talwadi sabo. According to Giani Gurdit Singh, the original name of the place was Talwandi Sahibo after the name of lady ruler of Lakhi Jungle. She belonged to Gujjar clan. By the passage of time Gujjars were ousted by Bairars (**The Gurudawara Gazette, Nov, 1965. page 85**). Alluding to Bairars' as to having firmly established in Lakhi Jungle in the Mughal period, Guru Gobind Singh wrote to Aurangzeb in his Epistle of victory that they were at his beck and call. Traveling in the territories of Bairars the Guru first halted at Dina-Kangar as the guests of the three Chaudhari brothers, Lakhmir, Shamir and Takhat Mal. From this place he wrote the historic letter known as Zaffarnama to Aurangzeb and moved on to Talwandi Sabo, enthusiastically his Sikhs hastened to gather around, keen to see and serve him.

Rai Dalla, the son of Chaudhary Salem was the ruler of Sabo Ki Talwandi when Guru Gobind Singh visited this place by the middle of March 1706. Previously Guru Nanak and Guru Teg Bahadur had sojourned here; the latter stayed near a mound of earth and prophesied that someday a great prophet would grace the mound with his presence. The great prophet was Guru Gobind Singh who came here and had his tent pitched on the mound now known as Takht Shri Damdama Sahib i.e. a resting place, where all sacred formalities and routine, religious ceremonies like those observed at other four takhts (Thrones of Guru) began regularly to be observed from 1663⁶ onwards. Here Guru relaxed after fighting fierce battle of Anandpur, Chamkaur Sahib and Khidrana (Mukatsar) and peace fully spent about seven months. He felt again as convenient as at Anandpur of peace times. His exploits at Damdama give a lie to the contention of Malcolm who says 'Most accounts agree that Guru Gobind Singh after his flight, was, from a sense of misfortunes and the loss of his children, bereft of his reason, and wandered about for a considerable time in the most deplorable condition'.

At Guru Ki Kashi, the site of seven shrines and seven pools, Gurusar, Mahalsar, Likhansar, Jandsar etc, and erstwhile headquarter of Missal Shahidan headed by Baba Deep Singh presently known as Burj Baba Deep Singh, Guru Gobind Singh re-established his court and surrounded him self with all pomp and circumstances of royalty. Damdama became the centre of Sikhism. According to Trumpp, about 120,000 were baptized here. It was also here that he dictated to Bhai Mani Singh, the entire *Adi Granth* from his memory. The tremendous work commenced on the Baisakhi day. In the words of Prof Puran Singh, Granth had a second birth from that Master Guru Gobind Singh and it came out of his soul as came out his Khalsa. In this copy of Granth Sahib he changed only one word. Khulasa (free man) was dictated by the tenth Guru as Khalsa (King's own) and there was a slight variation of one letter in other place in reproducing the whole volume of his intense Dhayanam. But actually additions made consisted of 57 *shlokas* and 59 *shabads* of Guru Teg Bahadur in various *Ragas* including *Raga Jaijaiwanti* in which hymns of that Guru exclusively appear. Thus thirsty first raga was inserted by the Tenth Guru. Four shabads under caption of '*So Purkh*' were also added. This authoritative and final version of holy Granth is called *Damdami Bir* upon which Guruship was bestowed for ever by the last Guru Gobind Singh in 1708. To quote Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, there is a copy of the holy Granth at Patna bearing the date 1748 Bik. (1691A.D) containing the hymns of Guru Teg Bahadur in their proper places. There is another such copy found at Dacca, which was written even earlier than this, in 1675, in the first year of Guru Gobind Singh's accession. Notwithstanding the presence of Guru Teg Bahadur's writings in such volumes, however, it must be admitted that the final form which became final for all time was given to the holy Granth at Damdama Sahib. This work of re-editing consisted of completing the *Nitnem* (Daily prayer) by the addition of four Hymns under '*So Purkh*', expunging certain unauthorized pieces which had crept in at the end in some copies, amending certain spellings here and there and so on. (A Short History of Sikhs, page 75-76).

Sakhi Book of the travels of the Ninth and Tenth Guru says that the new version of the Granth was completed on Bhadon Vadi Tin or 8th Bhadon 1763 Bik. Rejoicing and thanks giving lasted for three days. Amrit was administered to a large number of people including Bhai Dalla. Bhai Mani Singh was instructed to go post haste to Amritsar and install a copy of new holy book there. Similar copies were also sent to other important shrines. Guru bade farewell to other Sikhs as he intended to go to Deccan. Bhai Dip Singh was ordered to stay at Damdama and look after holy Shrines. For this purpose he was allowed to go home for the last time. In his absence Bhai Fateh Singh was to serve the Gurudwaras.

The Guru declared the village of Sabo Ki Talwandi to be a distinguished seat of learning and named it Guru Ki Kashi, where illiterate and foolish would become literate and wise. Likhansar preserves the memory of the Guru shaping some reeds into pen, and having thrown them in the pool of blessing that some day eminent writers and calligraphists would emerge from that track of land. Accordingly a centre of Sikh theology and scribing of holy Granth Sahib with an exclusive style came into existence. Besides a school of interpretation of Guru's hymns, calligraphists of repute produced fine copies of Granth, for example they would make the letter 'Ka' to appear as a beautiful eye of the bird 'Mamola'. Baba Dip Singh Shahid himself prepared some such copies in marvelous hand. One such copy with golden covers is preserved at 'Akal Takht' Amritsar. It bears the date of the completion as 1726 AD., which is evident from the following inscription in Golden letters 'Eh Bir Babe Dip Singh Ji Shahid ne Damdame Sahib vikhe, Sambat Bikarmi 1783 nun likhi.'

In this context it would be interesting to know an unconvincing story given by Sardar Karam Singh Historian that word 'Muridan' occurring in the first line of Khial Patshai Daswin was substituted by Baba Dip Singh⁷ for the original word *Faqiran*, thus making the line to read as '*Mitar piare nun sada hall muridan da kehna*'. This he did because the revered Baba would not tolerate his Lord calling himself as *Faqir* though he knew full well that this action of his would attract the similar fate as that of Bhai Mani Singh. What was his reaction to the words

'*Nanak Nech Kahe Vichar*' occurring in daily recited Japji, is not recorded anywhere. This and the fact stated earlier go to show that the story is baseless and no alteration in the writing of Guru was made by Dip Singh Shahid.

The tradition of producing, encouraging and appreciating the production of Sikh literature has all along been kept alive at Damdama Sahib in the interpretation of Guru's hymns, approving the contents of various Gurmukhi classics like 'Hum Hindu Nahin' by Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha, *Gur Gira Parkash* By Giani Sahib Singh of Dhamtan Sahib and works of Bhai Awtar Singh Vahiria. Takhat of this place up held the reading of Rag Mala, as the conclusion of recital of holy Granth and condemned the reading of Patra-path innovation of Namdharis'. It was also here that *Panch Khalsa Diwan of Bhadaur* was founded on the occasion of Baisakhi of 1907 A.D.

To demonstrate the spirit inculcated in Sikhs by the administration of Pahul, one day the Guru asked Dalla to bring one of his well built soldiers, as he wanted to test the range of a gun presented by a devotee of his. Dalla instead of standing himself as a target went around from one to another of his men for his purpose. No body volunteered himself for the sacrifice. Dalla was much ashamed and expressed his failure to fulfill the Guru's wishes. The Guru then sent for one of his Sikhs to do the job. Two men heard his call and rushed to him. Each asked for a chance. Both of them wanted to become immortal by the Guru's bullet. He asked both of them to stand in a line and fired the Gun so as to make the bullet hiss past above the head of two Sikhs. Dalla stood amazed, horrified and dumbfounded. The Guru smiled and told him that there was no cause for despair and if he wanted to know what valor was, he should join the fold of Khalsa. This happening recalled the one which occurred on the Baisakhi Day of 1699 and shows that on both occasion he simply wanted to test and keep alive the spirit of readiness and for making any sacrifice demanded by of the Sikhs; murdering actually was and could not be his intention, perhaps, in finding a target for his gun or in wanting the blood to quench the thirst of his dagger.

The noble cause of the great and gracious Guru did not end with fertilizing the barren human hearts. He even thought and that too reasonably of fertilizing the barren deserts of Malwa. According to Suraj Parkash, in his vision he saw and accordingly uttered, 'Dalla Singh, I witness the orchards of pomegranates, mangoes and bananas. Look Dalla Singh, there are green pastures, crops of wheat and sugarcane.' Perplexed Dalla Singh could not believe in the blessings of the Guru which the latter made to goad the people content with their lot to labor more for plenty and prosperity. Apprehending that the prosperity, promised in the blessings of the Guru might not be dismissed by logic minded people of twentieth century as a piece of fancy or fabrication by a poet biographer of the Guru, Prof Kartar Singh M.A says, 'It was at Damdama that the Guru blessed the Malwa land and said that the time would come when instead of *Bajra, Moth, Ak, and Weeds* the country would produce wheat grains, mangoes and pomegranates in abundance and canals of water would flow there. All know the prophecy has been fulfilled, those who feel inclined to regard this as an invention of the chronicles should note that the words were said in Sambat 1761 (1704 A.D) Bhai Santokh Singh completed his history, the Suraj Parkash in Sambat 1900 (1843 A.D) and the canals were constructed in the Malwa in Sambat 1941 (1884 A.D). So we must believe either that the Bhai Santokh Singh merely recorded a prophecy made by the Guru or that he himself was able to look into the future and ascribe to the Guru what was going to happen about half a century there after. (Life of Guru Gobind Singh page 224)

Finishing the work connected with his divine mission which commenced on Baisakhi day of 1706 at Damdama Sahib the Guru took steps preparatory to march towards Deccan. On 20th Kartik 1763 Bik, he ordered the advance party to proceed as is evident from letter (Hukamnama) of that date addressed to the Sangat of Bairars inviting them to accompany him in his journey to South India. He took leave of Punjab for ever and followed the advance party after ten days on Kartik Shudi five that is full two years ahead of his leaving for heavenly abode but the torch lit by him of ever remembering God (i.e. Simran), service, sacrifice,

serenity among vicissitudes which are characteristics of the spirit of Baisakhi ever remains shining.

First Baisakhi without Guru

Guru Gobind Singh left for his heavenly abode on 7th October, 1708, after bequeathing Guru-ship to Granth Sahib – ‘a divine event towards which all Sikh history had been moving’- and nominating Baba Banda Singh Bahadur as a temporal leader of the Sikhs which again shifted the scene of Sikh activities to the north. Before Banda Singh could reach Punjab, the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar, perhaps for the first time to celebrate Baisakhi which fell on Tuesday, the 29th March, 1709. The celebrations were marred by the attack mounted jointly by Deva Chaudhry of Patti and Aslam Khan, Subedar of Lahore at the report lodged by Ramji Mall son of Chuhan Mall Ohri, a Khatri of Amritsar following an altercation which was the result of the refusal of his gardeners to sell mulberries to the Sikhs. Chhuhan Mall had become deadly enemy of the Sikhs owing to one of his sons becoming a Sikh, an act of apostasy in the eyes of father. The congregation at the festival was plundered and Sikhs were obliged to fight and be besieged. The besiegers were however discomfited by the miraculous attack of lightening which struck down.⁸ Harsahai alias Harsa, Brahmin Diwan Deva and the combined forces fled which gave rise to the famous saying, ‘Harsa (Harsahai) was killed. Deva ran away and Aslan (Female gender used out of contempt for Aslam Khan) returned to Lahore.’ This was in the words of Kesar Singh Chhibar a divine act:

ਅਸਲਮ ਖਾਨ ਸੂਬਾ ਲਹੌਰ ਦਾ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਧਾਇਆ,
ਆਇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਕਿਰਤੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਜੁਧ ਮਚਾਇਆ।
ਸਿਖ ਸਭ ਘੇਰੇ ਔਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੇ ਆਇ।

ਗਿਰਦੇ ਫਉਜਾਂ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਘੇਰਾ ਪਾਇ ॥ 24 ॥

Aslam Khan Suba Lahore da char Dhaiaa
Aai Sikhan Kirtian nal judh machaiaa
Sikh Sabh ghere Amritsar te aai
Girde Faujan baethian ghera Pai ॥ 24 ॥

ਦਿਨ ਪੰਜ ਸਤ ਗੁਜਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਭੁਖੇ ਨ ਅੰਨ ਨਾ ਪਾਣੀ।
 ਖਾਵੰਦ ਬਿਰਦ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਿਰਦ ਦੀ ਲਜਿ ਪਛਾਣੀ।
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲੀ ਦਾਮਨ ਚੜੀ ਅਕਾਸ਼।
 ਸਭ ਕਿਸੇ ਡਿਠੀ ਸਮ ਚੰਦਰਮੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ॥ 25 ॥
 Din punj sat gujre Sikh bhukhe n Ann n Pani
 Khavand bird vaale bird di Laj Pachhani
 Sri Amritsar ji vichon Nikle Daman chari Akash.
 Sab kise dithe sam chandme parkash. ॥ 25 ॥

ਕੜਕੇ ਕੇ ਪਈ ਲਸ਼ਕਰ ਮਝਾਰਿ।
 ਸਿਰ ਭੰਨ ਹਰਿ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾ ਗਈ ਸਾੜ ਬਾਰ।
 ਫਿਰ ਹੱਲਾ ਕਰਿ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਾਇ ਪਏ।
 ਤੁਰਕ ਫੌਜ ਲੈ ਨੱਠ ਭੱਜ ਗਏ ॥ 26 ॥
 Kark ke pai Lashkar Majhar
 Sir bhan harsahai da gai Saar bar
 Phia halla kar singh dhai pai
 Turk fauj lai nath bhaj gae ॥ 26 ॥

ਸਿੱਖ ਆਹੇ ਕਿਰਤੀ (ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ) ਧਰਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਮੂਰਤਾਂ।
 ਅੰਦਰ ਗਊ ਦਾ, ਬਾਹਰਿ ਸ਼ੇਰ ਦੀ ਸੂਰਤਾਂ।
 ਪਏ ਅਖਾਣ (ਅਤੇ) ਗੀਤ, ਜਗਤ ਸਾਰਾ ਇਹ ਭਾਖੇ।
 ਹਰਸਾਂ ਮਾਰਿਆ, ਦੇਵਾ ਨੱਠਾ, ਅਸਲਾਂ ਗਈ ਲਾਹੌਰ।
 ਖੰਡਾ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਭ ਕੋਈ ਆਖੇ। ॥ 27 ॥
 Sikh aahe kirti (of Guru's) dharam dian murtan
 Andar Gau da Bahar sher dian surtan
 Pe Akhan (Ate) geet, Jagat sara ih bhakhe
 Harsa maariaa, Deva nathaa, Aslan gai Lahore
 Khanda for singhan da sabh koi Akhe ॥ 27 ॥

ਏਹ ਅਖਾਣ ਗੀਤ ਜਗਤ ਵਿੱਚਿ ਪਏ।
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਿਰਦ ਦੀ ਕਿਉਂ ਨ ਰਖ ਲਏ।
 ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਆਇਆ,
 ਲੋਕਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਅਖਾਣ ਇਕ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ 28 ॥
 Eh Akhan-geet-Jagat vich Pae
 Sat guruapne bird di kion na rakh laye
 Aaad Ant Rakhda hae Aya
 Lokan hor Akhan Ek Paya ॥ 28 ॥

ਨੀ ਕੀ ਕਰੀਏ ਜੋਧਾਂ ਮਾਏ।
 ਤੇਰੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਵਾਈ ਆਏ।
 ਚੋਧਰੀ ਪੱਟੀ ਦੇ ਦੀ ਮਾਉਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਉਂ ਸੀ ਜੋਧਾਂ।
 ਦੇਵਾ ਨੱਠਾ ਲੁਟਾਇ ਪਟਾਇ, ਮਾਉਂ ਜੋਧਾਂ ਖੋਹਿਆ ਬੋਦਾ ॥ 29 ॥
 Ni Ki Karie Jodhan Mae
 Tere Singh Jawai aae'
 Chodhri Patti de di Maun da Naun si Jodhan
 Deva Natha Lutai Putai, Maun Jodha Khohiaa Boda ॥ 29 ॥

ਜਗਤ ਜੇਹੀ ਦੇਖੇ ਤੇਹੀ ਆਖੇ।
 ਬਿਰਦ ਪੈਜ ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ ਆਪ ਰਾਖੇ।
 ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਰਮ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਕਰੇ।
 ਜਾਣ ਬੁਝ ਨਰਕ ਨ ਪਰੇ ॥ 30 ॥
 Jagat Jehi Dekhe Tehi Akhe
 Bird Paej wahguru Aap Rakhei
 Guru ka Sikh Karam Sikhi De kare
 Jaan Bujh Narak Na Pare ॥ 30 ॥

To sum up the God roared here in manifestation of the lightening as He breathed in the shape of tempest to scalp the Spanish Armada⁹.

This event had far reaching effect on the future history of Sikhs as it was the first time that the Kirti Sikhs-manual laborers, bereft of the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh fought successfully against the countless hoards of royal army. By the

divine help their faith in Guru's compassion and love for them, though, He, being physically removed from amongst them; and also in ultimate victory of the Khalsa was strengthened. They became fully confident of finding protection in holy and safe precincts of Akal Takht (Throne of Almighty) at Amritsar which became their centre and base of religious and political activities for all times to come. This event is therefore the starting point of the journey of Dal Khalsa for attainment of statehood in 1748.

The confidence reposed in the Guru fructified soon in the conquest of Sarhind on 12th May, 1710 which put them for the first time on the political map of India. Banda Singh led the destiny of Sikhs for six years. He was tortured to death at the hands of Farrukh Siyar on 9th June 1716.¹⁰

Baisakhi of 1721

This was followed by every measure being taken by the Government not only to destroy the Sikh power but to expatriate the community; Panth as a whole. The issuance of edict to kill a Sikh at sight by Bahadur Shah was repeated by Farrukh Siyar. A reward was also offered for the head of every Sikh. Their visits to Darbar Sahib Amritsar were banned. Seeds of faction among them were sown which proved fruitful in the fight for possession of Darbar Sahib on the occasion of Diwali in 1720, between *Tat* Khalsa and followers of denomination called *Bandei* Khalsa who apotheosized Banda Singh on account of his terrible end and believed that he has inherited the succession of Guru-ship from the last Guru. Baba Kahan Singh who had obtained permission from the local authorities for keeping the peace, advised the warring factions not to spoil the sanctity of the place but to postpone the settlement of their differences to some other occasion.

By this time Mata Sundri who, seeing that the usual visit of the Sikhs on the occasion of Baisakhi and Diwali to her and Mata Sahib Devan after the ascension of Guru Gobind Singh might be misunderstood, had directed the Sikhs to hold their periodical meetings at Amritsar, and sent Bhai Mani Singh to set the things right there. He was the high priest of Darbar Sahib when the Sikhs again assembled there to celebrate **Baisakhi** which fell on 29th March, 1721. The *Tat* Khalsa established themselves at

Akal Bunga while Bandei's occupied a fenced enclosure at Jhanda Bunga, Bandei leader, Mahant Singh of Khem Karan set reclining on cushions in a bullock which was drawn quite close to the front of temple. It was an affront to the Tat Khalsa and could result in blood shed. But the sagacious Bhai saved the situation by suggesting that instead of fighting they could decide their claim by casting of lots. He took two slips of paper, one bearing '*Wahiguru Ji ki Fateh*' and the other, '*Fateh Darshan*' the cry of *Bandeis*. Both were immersed in water at Har ki Pauri. After a little but alarming suspense the slip with '*Wahi guru ji ki Fateh*' rose to the surface of water and according to the agreement victory was pronounced for Khalsa. Most of the *Bandeis* bowed low to the decision but their leader was not inclined to yield. He told so through a follower of his, Lahora Singh Kalal who aired the sentiments of his leader to Bhai Mani Singh. The clash was further averted by another suggestion made by Baba Kahan Singh that the issue be decided by a wrestling bout between his own son Miri Singh and Sangat Singh son of Bandei messenger. The latter was defeated resulting in changing the minds of Lahora Singh and others of his type. Those who still persisted were driven out of holy precincts and in the ensuing scuffle Mahant Singh was killed.

Tara Singh Dalwan

Nothing untoward more than this happened to impair the unity of Khalsa and the ulterior affairs went on as they were; the Government of the day trying to undo what the Khalsa did. Bhai Mani Singh struggled hard in the sphere of religious, social and cultural uplift of the Sikhs and Diwan Darbara Singh strove daringly to sustain them successful in those dark days, in martial activities in the face of tribulations and vicissitudes. Innumerable Sikhs including many peace loving and amiable personalities fell martyrs under the Mughal sword. One such stalwart was Bhai Tara Singh of Dalwan who gave shelter and food to the homeless Sikhs fleeing their hearths and homes in the panic created by moving columns of Khan Bahadur Zakaria Khan's army. Both the acts of the Bhai were crimes according to law then prevalent in Pentapotemia—the land of five rivers.

In 1726, the first year of *Subaship* of Zakria Khan who took over from his father Abdul Samad Khan, transferred to Multan, at the instance of Chaudhry Sahib Rai of Naushehra (Amritsar District), Jafar Beg Faujdar of Patti sent an expedition reinforced by a larger force dispatched by Zakriya Khan under his deputy Momin Khan against Tara Singh, who with his twenty two dauntless men faced them bravely and fell fighting to the last. The martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh and his comrades shook the Sikh world and their avowed vengeance arising out of their resentment brought forth the budding flowers of chivalry like Kapur Singh (1697-1753) who was administered the Amrit by Bhai Mani Singh and admitted to the soldier rank of the Khalsa by Diwan Darbara Singh, and also valiant Sukha Singh (1710-1751) of *Mari Kambo Ki* whom Sardar Sham Singh brought up and baptized in 1726.

The boiling young blood gave a revolutionary tinge to their cause and slogan "*Raj Karega Khalsa*" by deciding to loot the Government treasure, to seize the arms and horses of the enemy killed or wounded in these scuffles and to punish the stooges and yes men of the Govt who directly or indirectly helped the rulers in day to day carnage of Sikhs. (Jiwan Britant Kapur Singh By Baba Prem Singh page 26). Before the eventful year 1726 was over, several cases of the Sikhs falling on Government treasure and caravans were reported. A party coming from Chawinda side with chests of revenue money meant for Lahore was waylaid and looted. Another coming from Chunian and Kasur was seized near Kahna Kachha. Murtza Khan, a royal merchant of Qandhar who supplied horses to the Emperor was deprived of his animals when his caravan was passing near Jandiala. When forces of Government tried to punish the outlaws, they were unable to contact them, as the Sikhs did not live in houses or forts, but ran away to their rendezvous in forests or other places difficult of access. (A short History of Sikhs by Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, page 120-121)

Baisakhi of 1733

Coupled with this difficulty of the Government, according to Hazara Singh Gurdaspuri (author of Jodha Sukha Singh) was the

panic struck by the notorious dacoits Mir Dad (Mir Mar) and Panah Bhatti which compelled Zakriya Khan to make peace with the Sikhs. With the approval of Emperor of Delhi, he offered to them a Jagir with Nawabship through the Kotwal of Lahore; Bhai Shahbeg Singh, who went to Amritsar, when the Sikhs had gathered there on the occasion of **Baisakhi falling on Thursday, 29th March 1733**. After some discussion the Jagir consisting of the Parganas of Dipalpur, Kanganpur and Jhabal worth a lakh of rupees annually was accepted and title of Nawab with relevant robe of honor including shawl, turban, a jeweled plume, a pair of gold bangles, a necklace, a row of pearls, a brocade and a sword was bestowed upon Kapur Singh who before putting on these placed at the feet of five revered Sikhs: Bhai Hari Singh Hazuria, Baba Dip Singh, Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgharhia, Bhai Karam Singh and Sardar Bhudh Singh Shukarchakia, a great grand father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and sought their blessings.

The unique honor done to Kapur Singh made him more humble and inspired him to serve the Panth more vigorously. In the words of S.M.Latiff he converted a large number of people, jats, carpenters, weavers, jhiwars, khattris and others to the persuasion of Gobind, and the religious respect in which he was held was so great that initiation into the Pahul of Guru from his hands was considered a distinction. He prided himself upon having killed 500 tyrant Mohammedans with his own hands. He was certainly the most illustrious and dreaded Sikh Sardar prior to the days of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Ala Singh of Patiala, who along with Hamir Singh ancestors of Faridkot house were baptized by him. Supernatural powers like granting boon to barren women are attributed by Giani Gyan Singh to this great man who himself died issueless bequeathing his Panthic leadership to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and nominating his nephew (Sardar Khushal Singh) to leadership of his Misal – Singhpuria confederacy, which, he founded himself, but his most outstanding contribution towards building the Sikh nation was the glorious part played by him to organize the Sikhs as a military force and political power in India and thus putting the Panth on the road leading to sovereignty, notwithstanding the great hurdles which the Sikhs had to face during fourteen years (1734-1748))

of his leadership. To mention a few, martyrdom of Bhai Haqiqat Rai(1734) and Bhai Mani Singh (1738), invasion of Nadir Shah (1739), desecration of Darbar Sahib by Massa Rangar and his murder at the hands of Mehtab Singh and Sukha Singh (1740), martyrdom of Bota Singh, Garja Singh, Shabaz Singh, Shahbeg Singh, Bhai Taru Singh (1745) followed by first ghallughara (1746).

Nawab Kapur Singh

Undaunted and unruffled Nawab proceeded with his organizational reforms of Taruna Dal and Buddha Dal. The latter was led by Sham Singh, Gurbaksh Singh Roranwala. Bagh Singh Hallowalia, Bhamma Singh and the Nawab himself, but it was a problem to control Taruna Dal. Kapur Singh changed the mode of control of army of the young's. Instead of keeping them at one place they were stationed at five different places in Amritsar i.e. Ramsar, Bibeksar, Lachhmansar, Kaulsar and Santokhsar. They were to be led as follows;

- First Jatha :** Dip Singh.
- Second Jatha :** Karam Singh, Dharam Singh of Amritsar.
- Third Jatha :** Kahan Singh and Binod Singh of Goindwal.
- Fourth Jatha :** Dassaunda Singh of Kot Budha.
- Fifth Jatha :** Vir Singh and Jiwan Singh of Ranghreta.

Each Jatha had its own drums and banner and was composed of 1300 to 2000 men. All had a common mess and common store for clothing and necessities. Nobody could go home without leave. Whatever was brought from out side was deposited in common treasury. Nawab Kapur Singh was a common link between the two Dals.

Owing to the activities of the Taruna Dal connected with the chastisement of public enemies the government confiscated the Jagir in 1735 and the Sikhs openly came out to square up the accounts with their enemies, sheltered and backed up by the government. Being driven out of Bari Doab they came to Malwa and helped Ala Singh, who got baptized from Kapur Singh on this occasion, in conquering area of Sunam. On their way back to

Amritsar they were attacked and defeated by Diwan Lakhpat Rai at Basarke on Oct 23, 1736. But soon after that the Taruna Dal came to their rescue and combined forces fell upon the Diwan and inflicted a heavy defeat, killing his nephew Duni Chand, and two Faujdars, Jamal Khan and Tatar Khan.

On his way back to Persia, Nadir Shah was harassed and relieved of his booty by the Sikhs. When he was apprised that the plunderers were a group of fakirs who visit their Murshid's tank twice a year and bathing in it disappeared and whose homes were their saddles, perplexed shepherd King warned Zakariya Khan to be careful as the day was not distant when those rebels would take possession of his country. Perhaps the taunting rather reproaching warning cut Zakariya Khan to the quick and he launched an all out war against the Sikhs.

In the turmoil created by Nadir's invasion, Sikhs threw up a mud fortress at Dallewal on the Bank of Ravi. It was razed to ground by the government. In view of expansion of field of their activities; the two Dals were further divided into thirty smaller Jathas on 14 Nov, 1745 when they gathered at Amritsar to celebrate Diwali. Following were to be Commanders:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Nawab Kapur Singh | 2. Sham Singh Naroke
(District Sialkot) |
| 3. Gurbaksh Singh Kalsia | 4. Karora Singh Panjgarh |
| 5. Karam Singh | 6. Gurdial Singh Dallewal |
| 7. Dial Singh | 8. Budh Singh Shukarchakia |
| 9. Chanda Singh Shukarchakia | 10. Kala Singh of Kang |
| 11. Khiala Singh of Kang | 12. Bagh Singh Halowalia |
| 13. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia | 14. Hari Singh Panjwar |
| 15. Chhajja Singh | 16. Dip Singh (Shahid) |
| 17. Sudha Singh (Shahid) | 18. Sukha Singh Mari
Kambow Ki |
| 19. Jassa Singh of Ichogill | 20. Bhoma Singh Kanhiya |
| 21. Jai Singh Kanhiya | 22. Haqiqat Singh Kanhiya |
| 23. Hira Singh Kanhiya | 24. Sada Singh |
| 25. Karam Singh Amritsar | 26. Dharam Singh Amritsar |
| 27. Jiwan Singh Mazhabi | 28. Badan Singh Mazhabi |
| 29. Bir Singh Mazhabi | 30. Aghar Singh Mazhabi |

The holocaust of Parol Kathua in which Lakhpat Rai Diwan of Subedar of Lahore; Yahya Khan is said to have put to death seven thousand Sikhs on 1st June, 1746 besides three thousand brought as prisoners to Lahore, put the Sikh activities out of gear for some time. Every body fled for his life and sought or fought for his safety wherever he could find it. Due to war of succession between two sons of Zahiya Khan, when and where opportunity arose it was got by ambitious Sardars to resume their work of liberating their motherland, in different areas so much so that by the end of 1747 there were 66 such bands of freedom fighters led by following men in the field:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Nawab Kapur Singh | 2. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia |
| 3. Hari Singh Bhangi | 4. Jhanda Singh Bhangi |
| 5. Ganda Singh Bhangi | 6. Natha Singh |
| 7. Mehtab Singh of Khakh | 8. Charat Singh Kanhyia |
| 9. Diwan Singh | 10. Gujjar Singh |
| 11. Garja Singh | 12. Nibahu Singh |
| 13. Lehna Singh | 14. Phoola Singh Roranwalla |
| 15. Sanwal Singh Randhawa | 16. Gurbaksh Singh Doda |
| 17. Dhanna Singh of Kalawala | 18. Tara Singh of Chainpur |
| 19. Bagh Singh, Kot Mahmud | 20. Haqiqat Singh Kanhyia |
| 21. Mehtab Singh Wadala
Sandhuan | 22. Jai Singh of Kahna |
| 23. Shoba Singh of kahna | 24. Bhim Singh |
| 25. Amar Singh Wagha | 26. Shobha Singh Bhikki |
| 27. Baghel Singh Jhubalia | 28. Gulab Singh Dalewalia |
| 29. Hari Singh Dalewalia | 30. Manohar Singh of Kanha |
| 31. Naudh Singh Shukarchkia | 32. Gulab Singh Majitha |
| 33. Mehtab Singh of Julka | 34. Karora Singh Paijgarh |
| 35. Hara Singh | 36. Lajja Singh |
| 37. Nand Singh Sanghnia | 38. Kapur Singh Surianwala |
| 39. Amar Singh Kingra
Singh | 40. Jiwan Singh Kila Jiwan |
| 41. Sahib Singh, Sialkot | 42. Dip Singh (Shahid) |
| 43. Natha Singh (Shahid) | 44. Manohar Singh Rania |
| 45. Mohan Singh Rania | 46. Bagh Singh Halowal |
| 47. Jhanda Singh Sultanwind | 48. Mirza Singh Kahlon |
| 49. Sham Singh Mann Bulaki
Chak | 50. Bahal Singh Sheikupuria |

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 51. Amir Singh Sheikhpuria | 52. Mala Singh Bulakichak |
| 53. Hira Singh | 54. Ganda Singh |
| 55. Lal Singh | 56. Tara Singh Mann of Manawala |
| 57. Mehtab Singh Lalpuria | 58. Rup Singh (Distt. Amritsar) |
| 59. Anup Singh | 60. Dasaundha Singh |
| 61. Tara Singh Gheba | 62. Dharam Singh Khatri of Amritsar |
| 63. Sukha Singh Mari Kambow Ki | 64. Jassa Singh Ichogill |
| 65. Jhanda Singh Kanha | 66. Tara Singh Kanha |

At the invitation of Shah Nawaz Khan who had ousted his brother Yahya Khan from Subaship of Lahore, Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded India and reached Lahore on January 12, 1748. Shah Nawaz Khan fled away to Delhi. Ahmed Shah appointed Jalhe Khan the Afghan Chief of Kasur as Governor with Momin Khan as his deputy and Lakhpat Rai as Diwan. But the Mughals under Mir Manu son of Qamruddin Wazir of Delhi defeated invaders in the battle of Manupur near Sarhind, in the middle of March 1748 and Subaship of Lahore and Multan fell into his hands of young Muayyun Mulk (Mir Manu) with Diwan Kaura Mall as Wazir.

A band of Sikhs under Charht Singh Shukarchakia (Grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) fell on the fleeing followers of Abdali and relieved them of horses, arms and other property and hastened to Amritsar to celebrate **Baisakhi**. Another Jatha under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia coming from Anandpur after celebrating Hola Mohalla which occurred on March 5, 1748 was half heartedly engaged in fight with Adina Beg near Hoshiarpur. The Sikhs brushed aside the attack and pushed on to Amritsar, where they found Salabat Khan Faujdar opposing their entry in the town. He was killed in action and the Sikhs took possession of the town and a large part of the District.

They celebrated Baisakhi comfortably on March 29, 1748 and discussed Panthic matters. Their decision to knit the scattered 66 bands into a more homogeneous organization and provide it with a fort proved a land mark in their history because

it ushered in a new era. Rightly says Malcolm, "The Sikhs nation throughout their history have always appeared like a suppressed flame to raise into higher splendor from every attempt to cut them" In the words of Teja Singh and Ganda Singh the idea of Panth had taken a definite shape, and had gathered around it a compelling tradition of implicit obedience to a common leader and a sense of responsibility in the units and individuals to the panthic whole. The organisation, which has so far worked on a small scale and had been satiated by the incessant blows of the enemy, now assumed larger proportion. While there had been only a few leaders before, now there were scores of them, all requiring to be bound together in a closer union. They gathered with their followers in large numbers at Amritsar on this day of **Baisakhi, March 29, 1748**, and discussed panthic situation. During this period Majha area became the scene of activity. At the suggestion of ageing Nawab Kapur Singh, Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was chosen as the supreme commander of the integrated Dal Khalsa consisting of eleven bands reorganized out of sixty six then existing, and **declared to be a state**.

The feeling of new leader was that they could no longer trust their safety to bushes and caves, they must provide themselves with a regular fort, which should not only serve them as a base of military operation, but should also lend security to their central shrine. A site for that purpose was selected near Ramsar and a mud enclosure named as Ram Rauni was build up for the time being. It was later turned into a regular fort and rechristened as Ramgarh after which one of the twelve Misls came to be known as Ramgharia Misl of illustrious Sardar Jassa Singh.

To quote G.C. Narang, the Khalsa now become a state, a power to be reckoned with and though often beaten, it was destined to shake the Mughal power to its foundations, and built its own sovereignty on its ruins.

Baisakhi under Sikh Rulers

After the ascension of tenth Guru, the scene of activities shifted to Punjab and Banda Singh Bahadur laid the foundation of Sikh state in Punjab. After much consternation, struggle and labor of the sword, the Sikhs under various Misals formed their

petty kingdoms after defeating the local Muslim landlords and established themselves the rulers of the areas and started enjoying the fruits of their hard earned success.

Banda Singh Bhadur

After the Guru left for his heavenly abode the scene of celebration of Baisakhi shifted to Amritsar. Three years after the conquest of Sarhind, Banda Singh Bahadur¹¹ visited this place as the first Sikh ruler and held his Durbar on Baisakhi of 1713 to honor and appreciate the services of his deputies and grantees.

“Most Sikh accounts do not mention visit of Banda Singh Bahadur to Amritsar on Baisakhi of 1713, except Giani Gian Singh in “Panth Parkash” referred to by S.Randhir Singh in “Sikh itihās de Partach Darshan”

ਵੈਸਾਖੀ ਪਰ ਆਇਕੈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਮਾਹੇ ॥

ਪੰਚਾ ਮਿਰਤ ਕਰਵਾਯੋ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਬਹੁ ਚਾਹਿ ॥11॥

Vaisakhi pr Aaikaē Sri Amritsar Mahi

Panchamirat Karvayo Bande ne bahuchahi

ਸਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਬਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਹਿਨਕੇ ਕਲਗੀ ਜਿਗਾਂ ਸਜਾਈਂ ।

ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਮੈਂ ਕੀਨੀ ਬੰਦੇ ਜਾਇ ॥12॥

Sastar Bastar Pihnke Kalgi jiga Sajai

Namaskar Darbar Mae Kini Bande Jai

According to Dr Ganda Singh “Banda was engaged at Lohgarh and other Sikhs were at Sadhura” In all probability Banda did not come to Amritsar. -Editor

Jassa Singh Ahluwalia

It was at Amritsar that several important decisions, which shaped the destiny of the Khalsa, were taken on Baisakhi days. In its dark days the Panth gathered at Amritsar to invoke the Guru's blessings and adopt Gurmatas. In one such gathering in 1748, 65 Sikh contingents were integrated to form the Dal Khalasa which was declared a state headed by Sultan-ul-Qaum Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. He was proclaimed as Padshah of Lahore on November 11, 1761 when coins were struck in his name. After

some time these coins were replaced by Nanakshahi coins minted at Lahore. In 1777 a mint was established at Amritsar and Nanak Shahi coins were issued there from, for the first time.

*Zabita Khan Rohilla and his son Ghulam Khan Rohilla embraced Sikhism in Thana Bhavan at the Bank of Jamna at the hands of Kaarm Singh Nirmala on Baisakhi day of 1777. Editor

Maharaja Ranjit Singh

In the fateful year of 1799, when the Lion of Mysore, Tipu Sultan fell a martyr fighting at the ramparts of Srirangapatnam, the Lion of Punjab was roaring in Lahore. On the seventh day of the seventh month of that year, three Bhangi Sardars, who jointly occupied Lahore, were ousted by Sardar Ranjit Singh, Chief of Sukarchakia Misl. He was destined to become the deliverer and defender of Punjab which was then balkanized by petty chiefs Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs alike.

This had been prophesied by George Forester in his letter XI of March, 1783 saying; "Should any future cause call forth the combined efforts of the sicques to maintain the existence of empire and religion, we may see some ambitious chief led on by his genius and success, and absorbing of his associates, display, from the ruins of commonwealth the standard of monarchy."

Two years later he was proclaimed at Lahore fort as monarch of the Punjab on the **Baisakhi day of 1858 Bikrami** (April 12, 1801). In the beginning of that year he was blessed with his eldest son. At a grand Durbar held on that day Sardar Ranjit Singh was anointed with the Tilak of *Mahrajgi* by Baba Sahib Singh Bedi.

But Ranjit Singh claimed no royalty for himself. To him the Guru was the true King. He was pleased to be known and called as *Sarkar* or an humble servant of the Guru deputed for the services of the people. He ordered that the coins of his Empire should be struck in the name of Guru Nanak. He named the beautiful garden laid by him at Amritsar after the name of Guru Ram Dass and the fort at that place after the name of Guru Gobind Singh, whose precious plume was purchased by him at a cost of Rs. 25000 from the sons of Bhai Hara Singh of Peshawar. Maharaja Ranjit Singh would sit reverently before the sacred volumes of Guru Granth Sahib known as *Kartarpuri Bir* and

Khari Bir and touch the sacred relics with his eyes and forehead to show his reverence. He would prefer to perform religious rites and hold ceremonial Durbars on **Baisakhi Day**. On one occasion in 1816, *Tikka Kharak Singh* was anointed as heir apparent and on another *amrit* was administered to Kanwar Naunihal Singh.

First Secular State of India

As his was a secular state, Maharaja went to holy places of Hindus and Muslims and offered huge sums in charity to promote goodwill and fraternity among his subjects. Accordingly he paid visits to Jawalamukhi and Hardwar. He was at Katas Raj, situated near the salt mines of Khewra, on the Baisakhi festival in 1806, which opened with his first treaty with the English in the matter connected with Holkar's taking refuge in the Punjab.

In the words of Dr. Ganda Singh, it is true that it were the Sikhs alone who had sacrificed their all for about a century to free the land from the clutches of the Mughal Governors and Durrani invaders. But when freed, the Sikh rulers, true to teachings and traditions of Sikh Guru's, unhesitatingly placed its Government and the resources in the hands of Muslims and Hindus alike.

Imam Bakhsh was the head of City police of Lahore. Hakim Nurrudin, brother of Fakir Azizudin, foreign Minister, was appointed Chief Public Health Officer and Mian Ilahi Bakhsh as Chief Artillery officer. Diwan Rattan Chand Darhiwala was the Postmaster General and Raja Dina Nath was entrusted with Finance.

Misar Rup Lal and Sawan Mall were his trusted Governors. Misar Beli Ram was his Lord of Exchequer and Jamedar Khushal Singh his first chamberlain. Diwans Mohkam Chand, Moti Ram and Ram Dayal served the state as meritoriously as Sikh Sardars like Hukma Singh Chimni, Nidhan Singh Panjhatha, Dal Singh Nanhera and Hari Singh Nalwa.

Similarly three Dogra brothers –Dhyan Singh, Gulab Singh and Suchet Singh– who were first appointed in subordinate services rose to high ranks so much so that Dhayan Singh ultimately became the Prime minister.

It was at a durbar held on the Baisakhi of 1828 that Dhyan Singh was given the grand title of Raja-i-Rajgan Hindupati.

When the Maharaja was on his death bed, he honored him with the highest title of 'Naib-ul-Saltnat-i-azam, Madarul maham-i-Kul.'

Maharaja Sher Singh

But the Dogra dignitaries did not remain loyal to the crown after the death of the Lion of Punjab. They had their own axe to grind. These traitors tried to fulfill their ambitions by their secret ways of regicide. Having deposed him; on June 27, 1839, they poisoned Maharaja Kharak Singh. After his death on November 5, 1840, they stoned to death his son. When Rani Chand Kaur, widow of Maharaja Kharak Singh took up the reins of the Kingdom in November, 1840, Gulab Singh sided with her and Dhyan Singh supported Prince Sher Singh.

Hardly two months had elapsed after Rani had become the queen of the Punjab, when Sher Singh invaded the Lahore citadel on January 14, 1841, as a result of conspiracy of the two brothers. He was victorious and assumed Kingship on January 21, 1841.

On the auspicious day of **Baisakhi 1841**, he stuck coins in his own name which was in contravention of time honored tradition of his ancestors. His action was resented and the new coins were rejected when offered at Takhat Keshgarh, Anandpur Sahib.

The Maharani was secretly done away with, by her maid servants on June 12, 1842. Maharaja was cruelly put to death by Sandhwalia Sardars on 14 Sep, 1843 leading to a series of inglorious murders and assassinations.

Annexation of Punjab

These circumstances were best suited to the British expansionists for usurping the Kingdom of Land of Five Rivers. The idea behind their mind was reflected in the suggestion, of the British Envoy at the court of Kabul: 'Crush the Singhs, macadamize the Punjab and annex Peshawar', which he made to the Governor General at that time. As a result of triangular conspiracy of British agents at one end and Dhyan Singh at the other, the Sandhanwalias being instruments of both. Sher Singh was killed on Sept 15, 1843 and Dalip Singh was proclaimed as

King. But the dark days were ahead for the Sikhs and the Punjab was annexed by the English on March 29, 1849 despite a mild protest from Raja Dina Nath.

The mighty empire fell like a house of cards without a stir and barely arresting the attention of the press abroad. The slavery brought disappointment, frustration, demoralization and degradation in its train. But the flicker of lamp of patriotism was not put out altogether.

Baisakhi of 1857

Fifty seventh year of Christian era is remarkable in our history. In 57 B.C. commenced the Bikrami era. In 1557 saw Akbar the great suppressing the rebellions of descendents of Sher Shah Suri. Sikandar Suri surrendered in May 1557. In 1657 Shah Jahan's illness became the cause of war of succession. Had he been a bit courageous to leave his bed of sickness and deal with his sons firmly there would have been no King Aurangzeb. The year 1757 opened with the invasion of Ahmed Shah Abdali and hostilities of English against the French as a consequence of breaking out in Europe of seven year war, on one hand and Sirajud-daula on the other. The Nawab was deprived of his throne as a result of battle of Plassey fought on June 23, and won with the help of traitors.

Revolt of 1857

The chain of conquests and annexation starting with Clive ended with Dalhousie who deposited and deported to Calcutta the Nawab of Lucknow in 1856. Sleeman had warned Dalhousie that annexation of Oudh would cost the Britain more power than the value of ten such kingdoms and would inevitably lead to a mutiny. In the words of Ludlow, surely the natives of India must be less than men, if their feeling could not be moved under such circumstances in favor of the victims of annexation and against the annexers. They did accept the challenge in 1857, and Basakhi fell on 11 April that year. The revolt of 1857 found its echo in Punjab. In various cantonments soldiers' revolted but timely action was initiated by Johan Lawrence to nip the rising. On the other hand states of Patiala, Nabha and Jind liberally extended help to the Britishers and were duly rewarded.

The memorable year 1857 is famous for the great revolt of Sepoys, which was the out come of several factors contributing to oppression of Indians politically, culturally, morally and religiously by the 'United Company of England', trading into East India's, popularly known as East India Company. The charter act of 1913, declared that:

'it is the duty of this country to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India and that such measures ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction amongst them of useful knowledge and of religions and moral improvements, that in the furtherance of the above objects, sufficient facilities shall be afforded by law to persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for the purpose of accomplishing theses benevolent designs.....'

It provided a handle to hundreds and thousands of British Christians to manifest their proselytizing mentality in openly slandering the prophets of Hindus and Muslims and injuring their feelings without least regard.

However the volcano of restlessness among the oppressed erupted in the form of resentment against the use of greased cartridges by Indian soldiers. The first shot of revolt was fired in Dum Dum on 26th January 1857, the day on which declaration of independence was made at Lahore in 1930 and India became republic twenty years there after. On the eighth anniversary of annexation of the Punjab viz March 29th 1857 the trouble started at Barrackpur when Mangal Pandey shot his English Adjutant dead. The execution of the former lit the fire in that cantonment. In the course of March and April, according to S.R.Shrama, some twenty five such fires were seen in distant Punjab around about Ambala. (*The Making of Modern India*, page 486). On May, 10 took place the out break of Meerut with which opens the chapter of the first war of Independence.

Baisakhi

In the current year while we are preparing to hold its centenary celebrations as well as those of Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, incorporated in 1857. Our hearts go back to the Baisakhi of that fateful year. On that auspicious

day Baba Ram Singh Namdhari administered Amrit for the first time and baptized five Sikhs.

1. Bhai Kahan Singh, Village Chak, Malerkotla State.
2. Bhai Labh Singh, Amritsar.
3. Bhai Naina Singh Wariah, Amritsar Distt.
4. Bhai Atma Singh, village Ala Muhar, Distt Sialkot now in Pakistan)
5. Bhai Sudh Singh, Village Durga Pur, Distt Jalandhar.

This action infused a new spirit and gospel of liberty in them. In addition to the vows prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh, Ram Singh(Satguru) enjoined upon them to observe other rules which he divided into personal, social, religious, and political. They were;

1. **Personal;** Not to drink alcohol. Not to covet another's property or women. Not to lie. Not to accept interest on loans.
2. **Social;** Not to kill female children or sell them. Not to allow marriages of infants under the age of sixteen or arrange by exchange. Not to give expensive gifts at weddings. Not to castrate domestic animals.
3. **Religious;** To rise at dawn, bathe and pray with rosaries made of wool. To wear their turbans straight. To protect cows and other animals from being slaughtered.
4. **Political;** Not to accept services with the Government. Not to send children to Government schools. Not to use courts of law but settle disputes in Panchayats. Not to use foreign goods. Not to use Government Postal services.

(The Sikhs; by Khushwant Singh P.91.)

The meaningful event had a vast background.

Namdhari Movement

The Namdhari movement aimed at maintaining the purity and glory of Sikhism. Its initiator was Sain Jawahar Mall, a liquor seller of Rawalpindi. His disciple Baba Balak Singh was a pious man of great learning, piety and education to his credit and attracted many followers to his center at Hazro now in Pakistan known as

Jagiasi Abhiasi Ashram. Baba Ram Singh became his disciple in 1838, when the former was serving under Kanwar Naunihal Singh in the Sikh Army at Peshawar. He gave up military service after first Sikh war. He was shocked to see the pitiable plight of the Sikhs whose kingdom and liberty was sold to the Britishers by their Wazirs and Commanders. Aristocracy had taken to dissolute life. Religious rites and conventions of the Sikhs who had discarded their own ceremony of marriage-Aanad Karaj- had eclipsed by those of Hindus. Social evils like *Sati* and killing female issues was considered privilege by high ups. A deputation of Bedi's waited upon John Lawrence, the commissioner Jullundur Doab on April, 24, 1846 and presented him a petition asking the Government to permit them to destroy their female off springs because all the Sikhs being their disciples, their unfortunate girls would be debarred from marrying. He asked them if it was allowed in their Granth or holy book and they acknowledged that it was not. He dismissed the deputation and issued proclamation and letters to all the chiefs in which without mentioning the Bedis he denounced, under the highest displeasure of the Government and the severest penalties for infanticides, Sati and the destruction of leprous persons by burying them alive or throwing them into water. (John Lawrence as Commissioner of Jullundur Doab p, 30-31)

Cow Killing

Killing of cow was legally banned under the Sikh rule. On the conclusion of first Anglo Sikh war Sir Henry Lawrence, the British resident at Lahore issued the following notification on March 24, 1847.

"The priests of Amritsar having complained of annoyance, this is to make known that by order of Governor General, British subjects are forbidden to enter the temple (called the Darbar) or its precincts, at Amritsar or indeed any temple with their shoes on.

"Kine are not to be killed at Amritsar nor are the Sikhs to be molested or in any way to be interfered with. Shoes are to be taken off at the Boonga at the corner of the tank and no person is to walk around the tank with his shoes on."

Lahore
March 24, 1847.

Henry.M.Lawrence
Resident

A wooden tablet with an inscription to this effect was hung outside Golden Temple. But the orders proved as written on the water. John Lawrence, Commissioner of Jullundur allowed the sale of beef and abolished tax levied on butcher's shops which yielded to the Government, Rs. 16829. A cow-riot known as Cow-row had already taken place in Lahore in April, 1846, another trouble on the same account occurred in Jullundur in July, 1847.

Vengeance of Dalhousie

Baba Ram Singh had all along been watching the conduct of British officers and their attitude towards the vanquished Sikhs. The former lost no chance to humiliate the Sikhs in any way they thought fit. How painful and shocking it was when on November 22, 1849; Lord Dalhousie visited the Golden Temple and flouting the under taking given by Henry Lawrence on behalf of the British Government, walked through the sacred precincts with his shoes on. Perhaps this might have given him some mental satisfaction of having taken the revenge. He had taken a vow at a Bararckpur Ball arranged on the eve of his departure for Punjab a year back. He said on that occasion, 'unarmed by precedent, uninfluenced by example, the Sikh nation has called for war, and on my words, Sir's, they shall have it with a vengeance.' And he did it.

At the root of insults like this was the moral degradation of the people which the alien rulers always tried to promote grinding their own axe. Baba Ram Singh therefore, went around the villages exhorting the Sikhs to turn back to Gurudwaras and Dharamshalas with rosary in hand and Wahiguru on lips. For revival of Martial spirits in them he enjoined upon them to recite Chandi-di-Var and Uggardanti. In order to have a unified code of conduct (Rehat Maryada) he deputed one of his comrades Bhai Rai Singh to Hazur Sahib Nanded to compile a Rehat Nama in consultation with Granthis of Takhat sahib. There was utter confusion in respect of ceremonial practices regarding *Pahul* and *marriage* etc. In Prem Sunmarag, written in the dark days of

Khalsa in eighteenth century, describes the marriage ceremony as performed on the lines of Vedic rites viz by going around the fire of havan.

A Blind Messenger

In the meantime, Bhai Labh Singh referred to earlier as one of the first five Sikhs baptized by Ram Singh, had cherished long to be so baptized. He was resident of Amritsar. On his asking Ram Singh to fulfill his wish, he referred the former to Baba Balak Singh. The blind man performed the long and arduous journey to Hazro. Balak Singh authorized Ram Singh to administer *Pahul*. The blind messenger went back to Bhaini to get his wish fulfilled at last on Baisakhi of 1857. (Ramgarhia Gazette, Simla, dated 16.2.1956, p.8), thus became the nucleus of outstanding events, the Baisakhi of Bikrami Samvat 1914, which stands like a milestone in our history.

It gave impetus to the movement which was originally a purely religious one and aimed at reforming the Sikh life and restore it to its original character. Gradually its ambition increased till at last it preached a revival of the Khalsa and as pointed out by Sir Lapel Griffin, the down fall of British Government.

Later events were certainly connected with the efforts aimed at revival of Swrajaya. Kuka Postal Service was established. Negotiations were set afoot with the rulers of Nepal and Kabul¹¹. A Kuka regiment was formed by Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Kashmir. Later on under the pressure of Britishers it was disbanded. Along with the boycott of Railways, courts, schools, and government postal services, a campaign against cow killing was started. A Namdhari poet's emotional thoughts burst forth like this:

Eh Malechh Nadnon aaye

Ehnan Butcher-khane laye

Sanun Gowaan da dukh khaaye

Singho! Sis den hun aaye Nam Akal de

(Baramaha by Chanda Singh)

‘These devils have come over from London. They have opened slaughter houses. We cannot tolerate the agony of the cows. O’ Singh’s, now we shall lay down our lives in the name of God.’

And this did happen in 1871-72. At the back of all these events was the spirits of sacrifice infused on Baisakhi of 1857. The Namdhari movement ended in blowing off 62 Namdharis from the guns and prosecution of Baba. But the spirit of survival was so great that it gradually emanated despite the excesses committed by Britishers.

Khalsa College is founded

Maharaja Dalip Singh was exiled from Lahore on December 26, 1849 and converted to Christianity at Fatehgarh (U.P) on March 8, 1853. This was, to Lord Dalhousie, “a very remarkable event in history and in every way gratifying.” Maharaja Dalip Singh sailed for England on April 19, 1854 (Baisakhi fell on 11 April) which marked the sixth anniversary of Multan revolt.

At Aden, while returning to India he again embraced Sikhism in April 1886, sometime round about Baisakhi. (12 April) For this he was forced to go back to Europe. He breathed his last in the grand hotel at Paris on Oct 23, 1893.

It is a coincidence that on that day boys were admitted for the first time to the Khalsa College School Amritsar, which had been opened a day earlier. The foundation stone of the college had been laid by Sir James Broadwood Lyal, Lient-Governor of the Punjab on March 5, 1892.

The history of Khalsa College, Amritsar in the words of Dr. Ganda Singh is practically the history of renaissance among the Sikhs. With its establishment in the 90’s of last century began a movement for the education of Sikh boys and girls on an extensive scale.

One hardly comes across an eminent educated Sikh of older generation who had not, at one time or the other, been connected with this great institution. All the Sikh princes, including Maharajas of Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha, Faridkot and Jind are closely associated with it and are amongst its chief patrons. The flickering torch of religious, social, and political life among the

Sikhs, which was becoming dimmer after the fall of the Sikhs empire has not only been kept alive by the Khalasa College, but it has carried light and learning to the remotest and dark corner of the country and has helped in raising the Sikh community to its present exalted position in the field of education and social uplift.

Sikh University

The college started its first year class on May 18, 1897. A time came in 1921 when the principal, Mr. G.A. Wathen felt that the college, which has been called by Mahatma Gandhi as the home of Sikh culture, could develop into a university. One day he suddenly called a meeting of the staff and announced that he had just come from Simla with a university in his pocket.

He set about preparing a scheme for the Sikh university and talked seriously of securing a charter for it which was to be at least as good as Aligarh or Benaras University. It was contemplated that the Prince of Wales on his visit to Amritsar would inaugurate it.

But the feelings against the British on account of their complicity in tragedy of Nankana sahib, were running very high during those days. As there was a likelihood of the royal visit being marred by some undesirable shouts by some misguided Akalis, it was cancelled and the idea of a Sikh university died in its infancy.

Maharaja Hira Singh

The Sikh Maharajas contributed very liberally to the funds of the college and some of them including the rulers of Patiala and Faridkot, had the honor of being elected as Chairmen of the managing committee. On Dec 11, 1905 the college was visited by the crown Prince George and Princess of Wales. High Royal highness appreciated the association with college affairs of the venerable Rajas of Nabha who had done so much for the institution. This was quite true. Some twenty months before this event it was this Maharaja who acted as a beggar to collect funds for the main building of the college on Baisakhi, April 12, 1904.

In his address at the prize distribution, held in the evening on that day, Lieutenant Governor Sir Charles Rivaz said: 'It seemed

to me obvious that unless a determined and united effort was made by the whole Sikh community high and low, to come forward with liberal assistance, the Khalsa college was inevitably doomed either to collapse altogether or to denigrate into a condition which would be far below the aim and the aspirations of those who conceived and started the project of a National Sikh college. I resolved, therefore to appeal to His Highness the Raja of Nabha as being the most venerated and influential of the present leaders of the Sikhs to exercise his great authority and demand from all Sikhs that they should cooperate heartily and effectively in a matter which is to them truly one of the national concern that they should provide by unstinted donations by means of completing the Khalsa college and enabling it worthily to fulfill the objects for which it was intended.'

To this appeal His highness Raja Sir Hira Singh responded most unselfishly and patriotically and, notwithstanding his advancing years and some what in different state of health, promised to come to Amritsar and preside over a meeting in which representatives of Sikhs of all classes and ranks were invited. That meeting was well attended and proved a conspicuous success.

Meeting referred to by Sir Charles was held in the shape of a Durbar and termed as All India Sikh conference, presided over by Raja of Nabha who appealed for funds. About Rs. 16,28000, including cash collection of about Rs. 14500 were donated by the rulers of Sikh states, chiefs and Sikhs at large; highest contribution of Rs 8,50000 being that of Patiala state. It was resolved that all Zamindars pay to college main building as part of their donation 6 pies in a rupee on their Government revenue demand. The function in the words of the historian of Khalsa College indeed was one of the most glorious events in the history of the Sikhs since the annexation of the Punjab.

In this way the destiny of the Panth was shaped by the actions and deeds of the Sikh rulers on Baisakhi day.

The Panch Khalsa Diwan came into being on Baisakhi of 1906.

Jallianwala Bagh

Baisakhi of 1913; Leaders of Ghadar Party decided & planned at Vancouver at the suggestion of nationalists of Indian Army to revolt, which took place in 1914.

Baisakhi of 1930; Punjabi's gathered at the banks of Sutlej where Bhagat Singh & his Comrades were secretly cremated by the Govt resolved to make every sacrifice to over throw the foreign Govt.

The ardent patriotism of Sikhs manifested itself vigorously during the first Great War. They were in the forefront of the struggle for independence. The President of Sedition committee, Mr. Rowlett wrote in his report, published in 1918, 'with the high spirited and adventurous Sikhs the interval between thought and action is short. If captured by inflammatory appeals, they are prone to act with all possible clarity and in a fashion dangerous to the whole fabric of order and constitutional rule....' (Page 161). It is therefore no wonder that the victims of firing at Budge Budge harbor were all Sikhs. In the conspiracy case of the Ghadr party most of the condemned men were Sikhs.

The meager representation which they got in Montagu-Chelmsford reforms stiffened their attitude towards the Government. They joined Congress ranks for which the British Government never forgave them. On 14th April 1919(**1st Baisakh, 1976 Bik**) took place Jallianwala massacre¹² which in the words of Winston Churchill was an ordinary event. A monstrous event which stood in singular and sinister isolation. According to Government estimate 1500 people were left dead or dying in the garden. More than one third of the victims of shooting were Sikhs says Khushwant Singh in 'The Sikhs'.

This was not the only penalty which the Sikhs received at the hands of British who were mad to quench their thirst with the Indian blood and blowing of Amritsar was suggested in the days of Martial law. Large hearted people like Principal Wathan dissuaded the authorities from taking such a step. Through out the Gurdawara reform movement and Nabha Dispute in which the Sikhs set a unique example of non violence, it was their refusal to dance to the tune of foreign masters, which was

responsible for their being macadamized by the British road roller.

Baisakhi of 1942; Sikh Regiments stationed in Fort William Calcutta hoisted the Congress flag on the fort and declared the independence of Country from Britishers. (Citation not quoted)

Baisakhi of 1948

It was Baisakhi of 1947, which saw the Sikhs burning themselves in partion fire like phoenix. Free Baisakhi of 1948 witnessed them rising from their ashes. Sikhs throng to the seat of their Guru in large number and seek blessings. Nishan Sahib is replaced on this day.

As the present has its roots in the past, the inspiring history of the Sikh's past would inspire the Sikhs to shape their destiny. This brief survey of history with reference to Baisakhi had a lesson more or less in the following words of

“Out spoken brave Heratius,
Captain of the gate
To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late,
And how man can die better,
Than facing fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
for the temples of his gods.”

The Festival of Baisakhi has an important meaning and place. The day was choosen by tenth master to create the true khalsa. The creation of Sikh panth of Guru Nanak Dev was re-dressed and christened by Guru Gobind Singh to fight the opression & tyranny of Mughal Empire. The events of Baisakhi days have transformed and shaped the destiny of the Panth. These have became landmark in History. The events good or bad signal us regarding people, politicians, heroes & villians in history and their contribution to society. It is hoped that future events on Baisakhi day shall shape our destiny in the right direction.

This is a compilation of five articles: The Spokesman Weekly,

1. **Baisakhi and Guru Gobind Singh**, Baisakhi Number, 1958.
2. **Baisakhi of Damdama**, Baisakhi Number, 1971.
3. **Baisakhi of 1748**, Baisakhi Number, 1969.
4. **Baisakhi of 1857**, Baisakhi Number, 1957.
5. **Baisakhi and Sikh Rulers**, Baisakhi Number, 1961.

Footnote

1. Pongal and Baisakhi are the festival that mark the beginning of harvest season. Many regions of the country celebrate it in their own way, in accordance with their tradition and culture; vishu is celebrated in Kerela as New Year; Ugadi or literally new beginning in Andhra Pradesh as New year. In Bengal we call as Nab Barsha as New year. In Maharashtra it is called Gudi Padvā. In Manipur it is known as Haraoba and there is much fun & merriment. In Punjab new year day occurs on 13th April, it is based on solar calender. Incidentally Baisakhi marks the Sun's transition into Aries which according to Surya sidhant occurs on 14th April. Arya Samaj celebrates the Baisakhi day, as it was on this day that Swami Daya Nanad, set up first Arya Samaj in Bombay. - Editor
2. On Baisakhi day of 1622A.D, Guru Hargobind Sahib declared at Amritsar that any five Sikhs of good standing could also initiate the new aspirant into the fold of Sikhism (The encyclopedia of Sikhism by H.S Singha, page 27) -Editor
3. He ascended the Guru *Gaddi* with the title of 'Satguru Gobind Rai Sacha Patshah'. At the same time; Bhai Hari Dass court poet, completed the compilation of 'Adi Granth Sahib' by adding the Bani of ninth Guru. This sacred Bir Sahib is in Sikh Reference Library Amritsar. Following words are inscribed at the last page of this valuable Granth. "Granth sampuran hoia, Likhia Hari Dass Likhari, Sri Guru Gobind Singh de Likhari likhia,

bhul chuk hove so sodhna, Gulam, Patit, Aagh Patit Hari Dass Likhari, Guru Gobind Singh Ji Da.” (**Reference Sikh Itihas De Partakh Darshan, by S, Randhir Singh Research Scholar**) –Editor

4. Bhai Vir Singh names this spy as Abu-ul-Trafi and the spy who was moved by grace, charm and greatness of the Master, fell at his feet and begged of Him to baptize him as well. Says he ‘I wept bitterly and narrated my doings as a spy and Guru Ji put his hand on my back, gave me ‘Amrit’ the ‘Elixir of Life’ and changed my name to Ajmer Singh. Just with this act, my sins of numerous lives got washed away. I participated in many wars. The spy further says that he sent in his last and final report to Emperor Aurangzeb. In this report he wrote eye witness account of happening of the day and also warned the Emperor in the strongest possible words not to dare challenge the incarnation of God, and desist from cruel policies and that if he did not listen to and act on my advise, then God forbid, he would loose all-his throne and family (Source, Giani Dalip Singh Komal of Dhnaula informed that this book is lying in the archives of Aligarh Muslim University “History of Ramgharias” Editor
5. On the demand of Sikhs to explore the possibility of creating Damdama Sahib as fifth Takhat of Sikhs, SGPC appointed a subcommittee vide resolution no 789 dt 30 July 1960. Committee submitted its report containing 183 pages to declare Damdama as fifth Takhat. SGPC approved the recommendation vide resolution no 32 dt 18/11/66, though the rituals were being observed since, 1963. Govt of India also approved it in April 1999 during tricentenary celebration of Khalsa.-Editor
6. The Management of Damdama Sahib Gurudawara was entrusted to Baba Dip Singh Ji. After his martyrdom at Sri Amritsar Sahib, the management of Damdama Sahib was passed on to the successor of Misal of Baba Dip Singh who was succeeded by Sudha Singh and then by Karam Singh of Shahidan Misal. He took possession of

some territory in Singh puria district, and some territory i.e. Shahzadpur and along with certain other villages in Ambala Pargana and made his capital at Shahzadpur, but remained at Damdama Sahib most of the times. As steward of The Shrine; contingent of 404 Sikhs, with two guns and ten Zamburs was stationed at Damdama Sahib. This small territory under the Sardar; along with other CIS Sutlej states came under the British control. It shall be interesting to note that for the good service rendered by Sardar Gulab Singh to British during Mutiny (the first war of independence) the Sardar Shiv Kirpal Singh was rewarded by the Government. Later on his son was created Most Exalted Order of the Star of India in 1891. Bunga Mastuana Sahib established in the year 1923 by Sant Atar Singh, is not a historical shrine but a prestigious institution for the young scholars in the theory and practice of Sikh faith and music. The SGPC took control of the Gurudwara from Capt Ranjit Singh of Shahzadpur in 1963. (Reference: the Golden Book of India; A Genealogical and Biographical Dictionary and History of Sikh Misls)-Editor

7. It will not be out of place to mention that after the death of Bhai Mani Singh in 1738, the question of desirability of keeping together all the contents of his version of Dasam Granth was settled here. Bhai Mehtab Singh of Mirankot, who along with his companion Bhai Sukha Singh was rushing to Amritsar to avenge the desecration of Darbar Sahib at the hands of Massa Rangar; arrived at that time and halted at Damdama Sahib. It was agreed that if he returned successful the volume of Dasam Granth would be kept intact, otherwise it would be divided into two parts one containing spiritual and the other secular contents. Bhai Mehtab Singh succeeded in his mission and the book was left as it was. -Editor
8. This battle was fought on 29th March, Baisakhi of 1709. Muhammad Aslam Khan was Naib Subedar of Lahore and Har Sahai was the Revenue officer (Bansawali

Namah by Kesar Singh Chhibar:edited by Prof Piara Singh Padam)-Editor

9. Philips II, the King of Spain considered himself as defender of Roman Catholic Church. He prepared an invasion of England; his worst enemy, through Armada popularly known as "Spanish Armada", comprising of 130 Ships under the command of Duke of Medina - Sidonia and a contingent of appx 30000 men commnaded by Duke of Parma, it set sail from Netherland in May,1588. The Armada reached and anchored outside gravesland and while waiting for the Duke of Parma, it was driven out by English fire ships.The Armada retreated and it was hit by severe storm and its 24 ships were destroyed and 50 never made it to Spain. Defeat of Armada was inevitable in the face of superior English Naval and expert manoeuvre aided and abetted by the severe storm. -Editor
10. In all, fairness the Sikhs had not come to terms in believing that Guru is no more. Above all the arrival of Banda Singh Bahadur in Punjab manifested their belief in glory of Great Guru during their times of great turmoil & tyranny. The spirit of Guru having percolated in Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh sangat extracted the power from the masses; the followers of Sikhism. It was inculcated that Guru in essence represented two things: the word and congregation say Dr Ganda Singh & Teja Singh. And verily it was this idea that Sikhs began to consolidate themselves to fight collectively to grab their homes & hearths. -Editor.
11. • Later research shows that Baba (Satgur) Ram Singh was in correspondence with the Russian as well, through his accomplice Gurcharan Singh; he was given a reply by Russians and came back in 1879 to Punjab from Tashkent. In 1881, Gurcharan Singh was arrested as a political offender; he was deemed dangerous by the authorities as he had acted as an emissary between the Namdharis and Russian authorities in Central Asia.

- But the arrest of Gurcharan Singh did not put an end to correspondence between Baba Ram Singh and Russian authorities in Central Asia. In 1883 a certain Shankar Rai was arrested in Peshawar with a letter of Baba Budh Singh to General Governor of Turkistan. Budh Singh was the brother of Ram Singh and had become the head of the sect after the arrest of Ram Singh.
 - Thus in 1870s and 1880s some public men in the Punjab corresponded with Russian administrators in Turkistan. (Source: An article by T.N.Zagorodnikova; Maharaja Duleep Singh Russian connection: A threat to British Raj)- Editor
12. Perpetrator of this crime: General Dyer was honoured at Golden Temple in the presence of a huge gathering. Thus earned the confidence, love & gratitude of Sikhs. Arur Singh head priest & Mahant could stoop so low that he presented him five K's as well. (Punjab Through Ages).- Editor

Ranjit Singh 'Kharag' was a prolific writer. He wrote in English, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu with equal felicity. He wrote extensively on religion, social concerns and Sikh history. He wrote well which was always reasoned and convincing. Whether it was prose or poetry, it showed literary excellence.

He had been writing tirelessly with missionary zeal. Unfortunately, he did not live to see his writings in book form. He expired at the age of 54. He left behind a huge treasure of valuable writings.



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